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An essay on the composition  
of a sermon

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AN  
E S S A Y  
ON THE  
COMPOSITION  
OF A  
S E R M O N.

Translated from the original FRENCH of  
The Rev<sup>d</sup>. JOHN CLAUDE,

MINISTER OF THE FRENCH REFORMED CHURCH AT  
CHARENTON.

WITH NOTES,  
By ROBERT ROBINSON.

STUDY TO SHEW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD, A WORK-  
MAN THAT NEEDETH NOT TO BE ASHAMED, RIGHTLY  
DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH.

*S. Paul.*

THE THIRD EDITION.

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A  
BRIEF DISSERTATION  
O N T H E  
MINISTRATION OF THE DIVINE WORD  
B Y  
PUBLIC PREACHING.

PHILOSOPHERS love to contrast the religion of nature with that of revelation, and some of them ascribe superiority to the former. Christian ministers have much better reasons for ascribing it to the latter; and there are two, which deserve particular attention.

If we consider each as a body of *science*, and allow, revelation contains all the articles of information included in natural religion, and many more than the religion of nature ever knew, all necessary to the perfection of a system of theology, and all important to the felicity of man, it will follow, superior excellence belongs to revealed religion.

If we advert to *the mode of communication* peculiar to each, and grant, it is not enough in an universal religion to have a body of science, there must

be also an easy method of imparting it, it will follow, superiority is due to revelation. Nature is a speechless beauty, silently waiting till depraved man shall find leisure and inclination to be instructed by dumb signs, by signs, which even cultivated capacities find hard to understand, are not sure at any time they have understood at all, and never know when they have comprehended in the whole. Revelation is really and literally a voice, clear and expressive, speaking at sundry times, and in divers manners. Shall I call it the mouth of nature? The wisest say, it is the voice of God! It was first delivered in audible sounds by the Creator himself to our first parents, it has been since uttered in his name by prophets, then by his Son, and after him by inspired apostles, and it has been repeated, explained, and enforced by a succession of publick preachers. By it, in all ages and countries, the ignorant have been informed, the indolent aroused, the profane placed before a tribunal of justice, and brought to genuine repentance, the penitent led to a throne of mercy, where pardon was proclaimed, the doubtful directed, the wavering confirmed, the timid emboldened, the distressed comforted. What school of philosophy has wrought effects so beneficial to mankind as these? As, therefore, we prefer revelation on every other account, so chiefly on this, its mode of tuition is all-sufficient, and at the same time the simplest and easiest in the world. *The things, that you have heard among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

The argument for revelation, that arises from publick preaching, is defensible in every point of view, and as it regards the bulk of mankind it has  
peculiar



peculiar energy. Were we to allow, that natural religion was a science of God as perfect as that which revelation possesses, yet all the benefits of understanding it would be attainable by only such as should have capacity and leisure, accuracy of observation, and justness of reflection. The poor and illiterate, the busy, the dissipated, and the dejected, the sick and the aged, thoughtless till sickness and age overtake them, the vigorous youth, in his career of fancied pleasure, the wretched malefactor, whom a dungeon brings to feel the want of religion; all these, that is to say, the bulk of mankind, are deeply interested in a simple sort of system, which may be understood in a short time, and which, while it provides for the payment of all due honours to natural religion, makes provision also for plucking a criminal from the horrid jaws of yawning destruction. Such a system revelation is. In natural religion, it is the creator giving laws, the judge trying causes, and condemning criminals, and how cold is the consolation, that arises from these conjectures, It is *possible* he may pardon the guilty, and it is *possible* I may be the man! In revelation, it is the good shepherd, traversing the wilderness in anxious pursuit of a lost sheep, that hears and knows the shepherd's voice. It is the tender father, all melting with compassion, and flowing with tears, calling to the prodigal beggar, his son, to return from penury to felicity, from the company of brutes to the bosom of God. Best of beings! what delight to hear thy voice, even wrapped in the gloom of the darkest thicket, and wilfully buried in the blackness of impenetrable shade!

It will be objected, publick preaching has been perverted : but it will be answered, as long as we have a standard it may be reformed to its original purity. The ark of Jehovah fell of old into the hands of heathens, who, having no dimensions or directions from the first artist, decorated it according to their own superstitious fancies, and in their great wisdom returned it to its owners, as if it had been a trunk of Dagon, accompanied with the glorious images of mice and morbid ulcers. (1)

Thus it has happened to all the ordinances of heaven. Prayer and preaching, baptism and the Lord's supper, have all fallen into the hands of bad men, and they have disguised and disgraced them : but what is reformation, and what is protestantism ? do they not include recovery and original purity ? In regard to the pulpit, let us at least *try* to separate indelicate human baubles from original workmanship, and to place the ecclesiastical rostrum in that neat simplicity of finished taste, in which the divine artist first commanded it to be made. Plainness in religion is elegance, and popular perspicuity true magnificence.

The history of the pulpit is curious and entertaining. It has spoken all languages, and in all sorts of style. It has partaken of all the customs of the schools, the theatres, and the courts of all the countries, where it has been erected. It has been a seat of wisdom and a sink of nonsense. It has been filled by the best and the worst of men. It has proved in some hands a trumpet of sedition,  
and

(1) *The Philistines took the ark of God. . . . But the Lord smote them with emerods. . . . And they sent back the ark of God . . . with five golden mice, and five golden emerods in a coffer.* 1 Sam. iv. 5, 6.



and in others a source of peace and consolation : but on a fair balance, collected from authentick history, there would appear no proportion between the benefits and the mischiefs, which mankind have derived from it, so much do the advantages of it preponderate ! In a word, evangelical preaching has been, and yet continues to be reputed foolishness : but real wisdom, a wisdom and a power, by which it pleaseth God to save the souls of men (2)

With views of this kind, I speak in the fear of God, who searcheth the heart.) and not to give offence to any, I collected and published the notes in the following essay. Alas ! does a modern episcopalian undertake the defence of every absurdity exhibited to the world by every *thing* called in past times a bishop ! Or shall a modern non-conformist adopt all the weaknesses of every one, who was persecuted out of established communities ! All other orders of men examine and reform themselves ; do men in black alone intend to render impropriety immutable and everlasting ! I have exemplified the absurdities, complained of by Mr. Claude, by the works of our ancestors, who are dead and gone, on purpose to avoid offending. Indeed, this was *necessary*, for who alive has one pulpit impropriety to quote !

I designed at first to have added to these two a third volume of the same size, entitled, AN ESSAY TOWARD A HISTORY OF PUBLICK PREACHING. The matter was intended to be distributed into  
twenty

(2) *The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. . . . But it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe . . . : because the foolishness of God is wiser than men. 1 Cor. i.*

twenty dissertations, containing one with another twenty pages each, and entitled as follows :

I. The necessity of some divine revelation as a ground of divine worship.—II. The revelation given to Adam, compared with other pretended revelations.—III. The patriarchal state of preaching from Adam to Moses.—IV. The state of preaching from Moses to the captivity.—V. The state of preaching during the captivity.—VI. The state of publick tuition, from Ezra's time to the coming of Christ, both in Judea and other provinces.—VII. The state in which Christ placed preaching.—VIII. The pulpit-state during the lives of the apostles.—IX. The state of preaching during the first three centuries.—X. The state of preaching in the Greek church till the reformation.—XI. A view of the pulpit in the Latin church till the same period.—XII. The state of preaching in Britain, from the most remote antiquity, and in Europe at the time of the reformation.—XIII. The condition of publick instruction in England, from the reformation till the death of Charles I.—XIV. The English pulpit during the civil war and the protectorate.—XV. A view of the pulpit from the accession of Charles II. to the revolution.—XVI. The pulpit in foreign churches, and in England, from the revolution to the end of the reign of George II.—XVII. The state of preaching among English, Danish, Popish, and other missionaries abroad, particularly in the East and West Indies.—XVIII. The present state of preaching in England among Roman catholics, episcopalians, moravians, methodists, presbyterians, independents, baptists, quakers, &c.—XIX. Justification of those in all parties, who

SIMPLIFY



SIMPLIFY publick preaching, by reducing it to its original standard of doctrine, language, and other properties.—XX. Survey of the whole, tending to prove the free and simple preaching of the pure word of God a publick blessing to society, and the power of God to the salvation of men. This was the plan.

In pursuing this enchanting path, I found pleasure enough to repay all the labour of collecting many materials, and poring over books and manuscripts: but I found also, that justice could not be done to that part of the subject, which I wished most of all to illustrate, without a nearer residence to the grand repository of unexplored *British* subjects, the *Museum*, and more leisure than my publick avocations in my own congregation (for I have no colleague.) would allow me to expect. I have, therefore, laid aside the plan, made use of a few extracts in these notes, torn, burnt, and given away most of the other papers, and patterns of sermons, that I had collected, and never more intend to resume the subject, except this once in the following brief sketch.

The first voice, that imparted religious ideas by discourse to fallen man, was the voice of the creator, called by the inspired historian, *the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, in the cool of the day.* (3) Whether he, who afterwards appeared so often in human shape, and at last actually put on a human body, descended into the garden, assumed a form, and conversed with our first parents on this occasion, or whether the air was so undulated by the power of God as to form articulate audible sounds, certain it is, Adam and Eve literally

terally heard a voice, and had the highest reason for accounting it the voice of God. The promise to the woman of a son, who should bruise the serpent's head, was emphatically and properly called THE WORD of God. It was a promise, which they had no right to expect: but, when revealed, the highest reason to embrace.

It is natural to suppose, God having once spoken to man, that mankind would retain, and repeat with great punctuality what had been said, and listen after more. Accordingly, infallible records assure us, that, when men began to associate for the purpose of worshipping the deity, Enoch prophesied. (4) We have a very short account of this prophet, and his doctrine: enough, however, to convince us, that he taught the principal truths of natural and the then revealed religion; the unity of God and his natural and moral perfections—the nature of virtue, and its essential difference from vice—a day of future impartial retribution. Conviction of sin was in his doctrine, and communion with God was exemplified in his conduct. He held communion with God by sacrifice, and St. Paul reasons, from his *testimony that he pleased God*, that he had faith in the promise of the mediator, for *without faith it would have been impossible even for Enoch to have pleased God.* (5)

From the days of Enoch to the time of Moses each patriarch worshipped God with his family, probably

(4) *Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied.* Jude 14.

(5) *Enoch said, The Lord cometh—Enoch said, The Lord cometh with saints--ungodly sinners speak against him, and commit ungodly deeds—Enoch said, The Lord cometh to execute judgment—The Lord cometh to convince.* Jude 14, 15.—*Enoch walked with God.* Gen. v. 24. Heb. xi. 5, 6.



probably feveral affembled at new moons, and alternately instructed the whole company. Noah was a *preacher of righteousness*, and by him, as an (6) instrument, Christ by his spirit preached to the disobedient souls of men, imprisoned in ignorance and vice, and continued with great long-suffering to do so all the while the ark was preparing. (7) Abraham commanded his household after him to keep the way of the Lord, and to do justice and judgment; (8) and Jacob, when his house lapsed to idolatry, remonstrated against it, and exhorted them, and all that were with him, to put away strange gods, and to go up with him to Bethel, to that God, who had answered him in the day of his distress. In all these (9) records of matters of fact, we perceive, short as they are, the same great leading truths, that were taught by Enoch, the general truths of natural religion, and along with them the peculiar principles of revelation. They saw a heavenly country, and were mindful of it, they had sight of a me- (1) diator, and were glad, and they had the pro- (2) mise of the appearance of him upon earth, which promise exercised their speculations, made a principal part of their publick informations, and they all died in the faith of its accomplishment. (3) How charming upon a primitive mountain, beneath the shade of a venerable grove, must the voice of a Melchisedeck have been, the father, the prince, and the priest of his people, now publishing to his attentive audience good tidings of salvation, peace between God and man, and then lifting up holy,

(6) 2 Pet. ii. 5. (7) 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. (8) Gen. xviii. 19. (9) Gen. x. xxv. 2, 3. (1) Heb. xi. 15, 16. (2) John viii. 56. (3) Heb. xi. 13.

holy hands and *calling upon the name of the Lord,*  
 (4) *the everlasting God!* A few plain truths, proposed in simple style, addressed to the reason, and expounded by the feelings of mankind, enforced by nothing but fraternal argument and example animated by the holy spirit, and productive of genuine moral excellence, accompanied with sacrifices, comprized the whole system of patriarchal religion. Such was the venerable simplicity of hoary antiquity, before statesmen stole the ordinances of religion, and hungry hirelings were paid to debase them.

The scripture, speaking in general terms, says,  
 (5) by Moses came *the law*: but, strictly speaking, the religion, that Moses taught, contained two parts, the one the *law*, that is, the religion of nature clearly explained in written precept, and terribly enforced by threatnings and penalties; the other the *gospel*, a promise of a mediator, and an exhibition of him in vicarious sacrifices; the latter assisted sense, the former required faith. The whole composed a fine body of religious science; it was like twilight, light in comparison with the night of past ages, and darkness in contrast with the succeeding day of the christian œconomy.

This great man had much at heart the promulgation of his doctrine, he directed it to be inscribed on pillars, to be transcribed in books, and to be taught both in publick and private by word of mouth. Himself set the example of each, and  
 (6) how he, and Aaron sermonized, we may see by several parts of his writings. The first discourse was  
*heard*

(4) Isa. lii. 7. Rom. x. 15. Gen. xiv. 18, 19, 20. xxi. 33.  
 (5) John i. 17. (6) Deut. xxviii. 8. Deut. vi. 9. xxxi. 19. xvii. 18. Numb. v. 23. Deut. iv. 9.



heard with profound reverence and attention, (7)  
the last was both uttered, and received in raptures. (8)

Publick preaching does not appear under this œconomy to have been attached to the priesthood, priests were not officially preachers, and we have innumerable instances of discourses delivered in religious assemblies by men of other tribes, besides that of Levi. *The Lord gave the word, and great was the company of those, that published it.* Joshua was an Ephraimite: but, being full of the spirit of wisdom, he gathered the tribes to Shechem, (9) and harangued the people of God. Solomon (1) was a prince of the house of Judah, Amos a herdsman of Tekoa, yet both were preachers, and one at least was a prophet.

Before Moses, revelation was short, and might safely be deposited in the memory: but when God saw fit to bless the church with the large and necessary additions of Moses, a book became necessary. This book was the standard, and they, who spoke not according to this word, were justly accounted to have no light in them. Hence the distinction between scriptural instructors, who taught according to the law and the testimony, and were called *Seers*; and fanciful declaimers, who uttered visions out of their own hearts, and were deemed blind, and thought to be in a dream, that is under deception. (2)

The ignorant notions of pagans, the vices of their practice, and the idolatry of their pretended worship,

(7) Exod. iv. 31. (8) Deut. xxxiii. xxxiv. 7, 8. (9) Deut. xxxiv. 9. (1) Josh. xxiv. (3) 1 Sam. ix. 9. Isa. lvi. 10. Jer. xxiii. 28.

worship, were in some sad periods incorporated into the Jewish religion by the princes of that nation. Ordinances were instituted to serve secular purposes, and mercenary men were employed to give sanction to practices, which the religion of

(3) Moses forbad.

All the prophets, and all the seers protested against  
(4) this apostacy, and they were persecuted for doing so. The apostacy became the established worship, and they, who adhered to the pure original standard, either fled their country, or concealed themselves, or lived under disgrace. First the ten tribes, forming the kingdom of Israel, revolted thus from God, and last the little kingdom of Judah, consisting of the other two tribes, followed their bad example. Before the defection of Judah, numerous refugees from Israel found sanctuary in Judah: but after it, they were harrassed in

(5) both.

All this time the seers, as often as they could, preached against the crimes of their countrymen. Shemaiah preached to Rehoboam, the princes, and

(6) all the people at Jerusalem. Azariah and Ha-

(7) nani preached to Aza, and his army. Micaiah to Ahab. Some of them opened schools, or houses of instruction, and there to their *sons*, that is, *disciples*, taught the pure religion of Moses. At Naioth, in the suburbs of Ramah, there was one, where Samuel dwelt, there was another at Jericho, and a third at Bethel, to which Elijah and Elisha often resorted. Thither the people went on Sabbath-days, and at

new

(3) 1 Kings xii. 25. 33. 2 Kings xvi. 10. (4) 2 Kings xvii. 13. (5) 2 Chron. xi. 13 17. (6) 2 Chron. xii. 5. (7) 2 Chron. xv. 1. &c. xvi. 7.

new moons, and received publick lessons of piety and morality. These schools were places of wor- (8)  
ship, in which prayer was offered to God, and the divine word taught to the people.

Through all this period, there was a dismal confusion of the useful ordinance of publick preaching. Sometimes they had *no open vision*, and *the word of the Lord was precious*, or scarce, the people heard it only now and then. At other times, they were left *without a teaching priest*, and *without law*. And at other seasons again, itinerants, both princes, priests, and Levites, were sent through all the country to carry the book of the law, and to teach in the cities. In a word, preaching flourished (9)  
when pure religion grew, and when the last decayed the first was suppressed.

The doctrines taught in this period, were chiefly these, the perfections of one God—the government of the whole universe by his providence—the moral obligations of men—the precepts of the law, and the penalties of disobedience—the depravity of man, and the necessity of renovation—the good tidings of salvation, the approach of a redeemer, and the necessity of faith, repentance, and universal obedience to him,—a state of future rewards and punishments—and, in effect, the same gospel, that was afterwards more clearly revealed by Jesus Christ and his apostles. (1)

Moses had not appropriated preaching to any order of men, he had given a general command, *thou shalt teach the words of this law*, which was equal

(8) 1 Sam. xix. 18. 2 Kings ii. 3. 5. 2 Kings. iv. 23.

(9) 1 Sam. iii. 1. 2 Chron. xv. 3. 2 Chron. xvii. 7, 8, 9.

(1) Heb. iv. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 6. Gal. iii. 8.



equal to saying, Let it be taught. Persons, places, times, and manners, were all left open and discretionary. Some of the discourses, which remain to us, are probably analyses, or abridgments of sermons, which were delivered at large. Many were preached in camps and courts, in streets, schools, cities, and villages, sometimes with great composure and coolness, at other times with vehement action and rapturous energy; sometimes in plain blunt style, adapted to the dregs of the people, at other times in all the magnificent pomp of Eastern allegory; and, on some occasions, the preachers appeared in publick with visible signs, with implements of war, yokes of slavery, or something adapted to their subject. They gave lectures on these, held them up to view, girded them on, broke them in pieces, rent their garments, rolled in the dust, and endeavoured, by all the methods they could devise, agreeably to the customs of their country, to impress the minds of their auditors with the nature and importance of their doctrines; nor was it uncommon for the hearers to express their emotions during the delivery of the sermon. We had enthusiasts in England in the last century, who affected in the same manner a spirit of prophecy, and, in imitation of the ancient Jewish prophets, preached by signs: but they forgot they were not in the East.

The sermons of the old prophets often produced amazing effects, both in the principles and morals of the people. Single discourses, at some times, brought a whole nation to repentance, although at other times the greatest of them complained, *Who hath believed our report? All day long we have stretched forth our hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people!*

people! In the first case, they were in extacies, (2) such was their benevolence; in the last, they retired in silence, and wept in secret places. Some in first transports of passion execrated the day of their birth, and, when deliberation and calmness returned, committed themselves, their country and their cause, to God.

These men were highly esteemed by the pious part of the nation, them they consulted in doubtful cases, to them they fled for consolation in distress, and them they sometimes loaded with benefits. The good Josiah, although he sometimes performed the office of reading the law in publick, and expounding it himself, yet kept one, who was stiled the *king's seer*, and others, who were scribes, and who read and expounded the law to him and his court. It had been common with his ancestors (3) to do the same: Hence false prophets, bad men, who found it worth while to affect to be good, crowded the courts of princes. Jezebel an idolatress had four hundred prophets of Baal, and Ahab, a pretended worshipper of Jehovah, had as many pretended prophets of his own profession. (4) These covered their want of principle, with an exterior like that of the true prophets, and even went beyond them, witness the frantick zeal of those, who publickly disputed with Elijah. By means of these deceivers, the faithful preachers of the divine word sunk into disgrace. *Zedekiah would not humble himself when a Jeremy spoke to him from the mouth of the Lord. The chief of the priests imitated the prince, and the people them. The God of*

(2) Rom. x. 16, 21. (3) 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29, 30. &c. xxxv. 15.—xxxiv. 18, &c. (4) 2 Chron. xviii. 5.

*of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending : but they mocked the messengers of God, despised his word, and misused his prophets, till the wrath of the Lord arose, and there was no remedy. Into captivity, therefore, for seventy years they were obliged to go.*

The prophets, and good men, who were carried captive along with their countrymen, did not leave their religion behind them. In Babylon, where idolatry was established, they professed, and suffered for non-conformity, and assembled in private houses for the worship of God, and there the prophets availed themselves of the dispensation to inculcate the principles of their religion, and to possess their fellow captives with a sincere aversion to idolatry. There, as their former preachers had foretold, being *allured into a wilderness*, and surrounded with *a hedge of thorns*, so that they could not return home, God *hewed them by his prophets, and slew them by the words of his mouth*; there he spoke home to their hearts, took away the names of *Baalim out of their mouths*, and taught them once more to call him *Isbi*, the being to whom they (5) were in contract for obedience. To the success of preaching, and not to the smart of affliction, are we to attribute the remarkable reconversion of the Jews to the belief and worship of one God, a conversion that remains to this day. The Jews have since fallen into horrid crimes : but they have never since this period lapsed into idolatry.

The prophet Ezekiel was a man extraordinarily appointed to preach to the captives, and endowed with singular abilities for the execution of his office.

(5) Hosea iii. 14. 6. vi. 5. ii. 14. 17. 16.



office. He received his instructions in extacies, (6) and he uttered them generally in rapturous vehemence. He had a *pleasant voice*, and the entire management of it, he could *play well on the instrument*, that is, he knew how to dispose his organs of speech so as to give energy by giving proper tone and accent to all he spoke. The people were as much charmed with his discourses as if they been odes set to musick, he was a *lovely song* in their ears, and they used to *say to one another, Come, and let us hear what is the word, that cometh forth from the Lord.* The elders and (7) the people assembled at his house, and sat before him, and there, sometimes in the morning, and at other times in the evening, he delivered those sharp and pointed sermons, which are contained in his prophecy. One while he preached by signs, as the former prophets had done, another while he smote with his hand, and stamped with his foot, when he addressed them, trembling at their depravities, and weeping over their calamities. His writings contain the doctrines, which he taught; and the manner, in which he delivered them, is in all probability a pattern of the method employed by all the other preachers during the captivity.

It should seem, after the Jews had rejected the true prophets, they were punished with multitudes of publick preachers, pretending to a spirit of prophecy. These pests of society had art and address enough to insinuate themselves into favour, and to obtain popularity. They swarmed every where, and became the heaviest curse, that was ever inflicted on a guilty world. The prophets

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(6) Ezek. ii. iii. (7) Ezek. xxxiv. 30, &c.

phets held them in the utmost abhorrence, and a great part of their ministry was addressed to unmask them. They described them by every odious image they could invent, and they pointed out in the clearest manner the dreadful consequences of their detestable hypocrisy.

These men were the mere creatures of those abandoned tyrants, who usurped the crown, and they were set up to assist their profligate creators in despoiling the people of their liberty and God of his glory. Religion was made an engine of state, and these hirelings were appointed to work it. Jeroboam, the first manufacturer of these detested tools, made them of the national filth; he, in mere policy, took the basest and most depraved and unprincipled of the nation, and ordained them ministers of that motley religion, which he had set up to prevent the return of the ten tribes to the family of David. The King of Assyria, with views exactly similar, allowed the captives to perpetuate this vile race, and we find them in Babylon, described and execrated by Ezekiel.

The success of these bad men is chiefly to be ascribed to these four causes. First, they pretended a *divine right*, and said, The *Lord* saith so and so. They were too artful to profess the truth, that would have been, The *king* saith so and so, The lying spirit of the *devil* sent us to preach thus and thus: but here was a pretended reverence of God, and an acknowledgement of his authority.

(1) Secondly, they affected to *imitate* the true prophets, till they had obtained the popular plaudit, then they dropped them into obscurity, and sunk them

(8) 1 Kings xii. 26—32. (9) 2 Kings xvii. Ezek. xiii.  
 (1) 2 Chron. xviii. 3—12—21.

them into disgrace, and at last they turned the general odium over them, because they continued inflexibly upright, and could not be brought to mimic their betrayers. Thirdly, they framed their *doctrine* and deportment, not by the nature of God, and the dictates of his written word: but, on the contrary, by the prevailing *passions* of the bulk of their auditors. Their study was to please, and they said and did whatever they thought would answer that end. Fourthly, they were the constant *companions* of their admirers, and went with them into the perpetration of every crime. The true prophets were irksome or insipid to bad men; but these, these were chaplains exactly suited to their patrons, they could fast with Ahab, and feast with Jezebel.

According to those, who had the best opportunities of knowing them, their qualifications were mean and their dispositions wicked. Hence they are called *blind, ignorant, dumb* dogs, that *could* not bark—*greedy* dogs, for their avarice, every one looking for his gain from his quarter—*sleeping* dogs, for their indolence—*drunkards*, saying, Fetch wine, we will fill ourselves with strong drink, to-morrow shall be as to-day, and much more abundant—*persecutors* when in prosperity, and *cowards* in adversity—dogmatical *cavillers* about learning and religion, while they were destitute of decency, civility, and common sense—*unprincipled* wretches, who, though they would not *shut a door in the temple*, or *kindle a fire on the altar* of God, their creator, *for nought*, would protect, applaud, and canonize the greatest criminals for a *handful of*  
c 2
barley,



barley, and doom millions to destruction for a  
(2) *piece of bread!*

When the seventy years of the captivity were expired, the captives were divided in their opinion about returning. Some traded and flourished in Babylon, and, having no faith in the divine promise, and too much confidence in their sordid guides, chose to live where idolatry was the established religion, and despotism the soul of civil government. The good prophets and preachers, Zerubbabel, Joshua, Haggai, and others, having confidence in the word of God, and aspiring after their natural, civil, and religious rights, endeavoured by all means to extricate themselves and their countrymen from that mortifying state, into which the crimes of their ancestors had brought them. They wept, fasted, prayed, preached, prophesied, and at length prevailed. The chief instruments were Nehemiah and Ezra; the first was governor and reformed their civil state, the last was a *scribe of the law of the God of heaven*, and addressed himself to ecclesiastical matters, in which he rendered the noblest service to his country, and to all posterity.

Ever since Moses had committed the revelations of God to writing, and had commanded the book to be transcribed, a great number of ingenious men, of several tribes, had taken up the profession of writing, and were called scribes. The five  
sacred

(2) Isaiah lvi. Jer. xxiii. Ezek. xiii. 19. xxxiv. Mal. i. 10. Amos vii. 12, &c. Jer. xx. &c. &c. 2 Chron. xviii. Zedekiah smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee! And Micaiah said, Thou shalt see on that day, when thou shalt run from chamber to chamber to hide thyself. 23, 24.

sacred books of Moses contained the genealogies of all the families of the nation, the body of jurisprudence, that directed all their courts of law, the whole ritual of the church, and many other articles of necessary and daily use. The prophets since Moses had added to the inspired code, and by so doing had both increased knowledge, and the necessity of numberless scribes to diffuse it. The men, who employed themselves thus in transcribing the inspired writings, were called scribes of the *law*.

The benefit of writing and records presently became obvious, and other scribes were soon employed about secular matters. There were under the judges many of the tribe of Zebulun, who *handed the pen of the writer*, scribes who kept records. There were afterward scribes of the *king*, that is, private secretaries; scribes of the *host*, that is, secretaries at war, or commissaries of the army; and the profession became very honourable and lucrative. This class of writers, I should call, for distinction sake, *secular* scribes.

Writing, reading, giving a sense of what is written, studying to find out a true sense to give, and proving and supporting the sense given, go together, and scribes naturally became studious, disputatious, and learned men. Ezra, the reformer of the church at the return from captivity, was the most eminent of his profession, a *ready scribe* in the law of his God.

This man laid the foundation of reformation in religious principle, and he rested religious principle on that infallible rock, the word of God. In order to lay a firm and good ground of this, he collected and collated manuscripts of the sacred writings,

writings, added a few explanatory lines, and a few anecdotes (himself was inspired) and arranged and published the holy canon in its present form: To this he added a second work, as necessary as the former; he revived, and new modelled publick preaching, and exemplified his plan in his own person. The Jews had almost lost in the seventy years captivity their original language, that was now become a dead language, and they spoke a jargon made up of their own language, and that of the Chaldeans, and other nations, with whom they had been confounded. Formerly preachers had only explained subjects: now they were obliged to explain words, words, which in the sacred code were become obsolete, equivocal, or dead.

Now also it became more necessary than ever to open houses for popular instruction in towns all over the country, after the pattern of the schools of the old prophets. Accordingly, houses were erected, nor for ceremonial worship, as sacrificing, for this was confined to the temple: but for moral obedience, as praying, preaching, reading the law, divine worship, and social duties. These houses were called synagogues, the people repaired hither morning and evening for prayer; and on Sabbaths and festivals the law was read and expounded to them. It is with a great deal of justice, that learned men ascribe the following Jewish aversion to idolatry, and their attachment to the law, to constant publick preaching in their synagogues.

We have a short, but beautiful description (3) of the manner of Ezra's first preaching. Upwards



wards of fifty thousand people assembled in a street, or large square, near the Watergate. It was early in the morning of a Sabbath-day. A pulpit of wood, in the fashion of a small tower, was placed there on purpose for the preacher, and this turret was supported by a scaffold, or temporary gallery, where, in a wing on the right hand of the pulpit, sat six of the principal preachers, and in another on the left seven. Thirteen other principal teachers, and many Levites, were present also, on scaffolds erected for the purpose, alternately to officiate. When Ezra ascended the pulpit, he produced and opened the book of the law, and the whole congregation instantly rose up from their seats, and stood. Then he offered up prayer and praise to God, the people bowing their heads, and worshipping the Lord with their faces to the ground; and at the close of the prayer with uplifted hands they solemnly pronounced Amen, Amen. Then, all standing, Ezra, assisted at times by the Levites, *read the law distinctly, gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.* The sermons delivered so affected the hearers, that they wept excessively, and about noon the sorrow became so exuberant and immeasurable, that it was thought necessary by the governor, the preacher, and the Levites to restrain it. They, therefore, reminded the congregation—that a just grief might run into excess—that there was an incongruity between a festival and lamentation—and that on this festival, there were singular causes of extraordinary joy, they were delivered from captivity, the law was restored, and they, the very poorest of them, had been made by the pains of the preachers to understand it. *Go your way, said they, eat the fat—drink the sweet—send portions unto them, for whom*  
*nothing*

*nothing is prepared.*—Be not discouraged—religious joy is a people's strength. The wise and benevolent sentiments of these noble souls were imbibed by the whole congregation, and fifty thousand troubled hearts were calmed in an instant. Home *they returned to eat, to drink, to send portions, and to make mirth, because they had understood the words, that were declared unto him.* Plato was alive at this time, teaching dull philosophy to cold academicks: but what was he, and what was Xenophon, or Demosthenes, or any of the pagan orators, in comparison with these men!

From this period to that of the appearance of Jesus Christ, publick preaching was universal, synagogues were multiplied, there were thirteen in his time at Tiberias, and at Jerusalem, they say, four hundred. In the latter number most likely are included proseuchas, or small places for private prayer.

The great concourse of people, who attended the service at the synagogues, and the manifest utility of publick instruction, rendered some sort of order necessary. A small assembly, therefore, was formed of the wisest and most intelligent of the priests and scribes, these were a council, called elders, and the president was named ruler of the synagogue. The rulers sometimes preached sermon-wise, at other times instructed the people by way of question and answer, and at all times directed who should speak and preach in the synagogue.

The scribes were in their meridian glory in the time of Ezra. He and his colleagues were truly great men, and their expositions of holy scripture were remembered long after their decease, and quoted by their successors. Had successive scribes  
quoted

quoted their comments as comments, all had been well: but they alledged them as *law*, and gave them as much authority as the text itself. This was setting a dangerous snare for eager disputants, more intent on gaining their argument than on investigating the truth, and into this temptation the whole nation fell. Hence came the national attachment to the traditions of the elders, and hence the invention and propagation of traditions, never heard of by the elders. Hence sects arose, and hence, in the end, that *inefficiency* of the divine word, of which our Lord complained; for, where scripture is not allowed to operate as *law*, it is, in strictness of speech, of *no* effect.

All the sects in the Jewish church ran the same fate as elsewhere, they rose in weakness, and ended in wickedness. A silly, superstitious, weak enthusiast is the natural founder of a sect, and a bold villain is the usual supporter of it. The first profelytes are in earnest, the last are knaves.

It would carry us too far from our subject, were we to particularize the rise, the history, the opinions, and the ruin of Samaritans, Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and other religious parties in Judea. They are in general pretty well known, and the New Testament gives us a general idea of the doctrines held by all except the Essenes, who were a kind of recluses, Jewish monks. It is sufficient to observe, each party preached, both in Jerusalem, and in all other parts of Jewry; and, when the calamities of their own country, or the prosperity of other places, induced them to quit their native soil, and to settle elsewhere, they built synagogues, or met in private houses, where, on Sabbath days and festivals, they worshipped God, and preaching



(4) was always a part of their service. It is not necessary to give patterns of their sermons here, or to describe their manner of delivering them. In general, we may remember, the Jews in this period were better known than their ancestors had been to the Western world, and they themselves travelled into other countries more. They had therefore dropped many of the ruder ways of speaking used by the old prophets, and had adopted the more sedate and polished methods of publick speakers in pagan schools, and senates, and courts of law. This art imported into the church makes sleepy sermons for the dog-days. Happy for them, had they rested here: but alas! they embraced popular errors, and pagan vices, and incorporated both into the religion of Moses, so that in the reign of Herod, who was a creature of the Emperor Augustus, the Jewish church was sunk to a level with pagan temples, and all were considered as engines of state. Inferior churchmen were in subjection to the high priest, and the high priest himself was an officer of the crown. It is easy to guess what preaching they had.

In those days appeared that singular preacher, John the Baptist. He was extraordinarily commissioned from heaven to announce the advent of the promised Messiah, and he adopted the plan formerly used by Ezra, appealing by publick preaching to the common sense of mankind. He took Elijah for his model, and, as the times were very much like those, in which that prophet lived,  
he

(4) Phil. Jud. de Sept. et Fest. — Buxtorfi Synagog. — Wagenseil Tel. Ign. — Vitring. Synagog. — Alting. Heptat. Tom. v. Diss. 2.

he chose a doctrine and a method very much resembling those of that venerable man. His subjects were few, plain, and important, repentance was the chief. His style was vehement, his images were bold and well placed, his deportment was solemn, his action eager, and his morals severe. The people flocked in great multitudes after him, and surrounded him with a popularity, of which his enemies were afraid. He fell, however, a sacrifice to female revenge at a tyrant's drunken bout, where despotism gave whatever prostitution required. Jesus Christ had been openly introduced by John to the knowledge and affection of the people, and at John's death Jesus appeared in publick as a preacher. Before his ministerial labours began, and preparatory to them, he had that vision recorded in the first eleven verses of the fourth chapter of Matthew, a vision, as one of our ministers has most beautifully shewn, excellently (5) adapted to the time and purpose.

Our Lord Jesus Christ had been long expected to appear in the Jewish church, as *a prophet like unto Moses*, and his ministry had been characterized, as the most beneficial, that could be imagined. The people, therefore, formed the highest expectations of his œconomy, and he framed it so as to exceed all description. *He taught . . . not as the scribes.*

First, instead of *deriving* his doctrine from popular notions, human passions, the interests of princes, or the traditions of priests, he took it immediately from the holy scriptures, to which he constantly appealed. The truths of natural reli-

gion he explained and established ; the doctrines of revelation he expounded, elucidated, and enforced, and thus brought life and immortality to *light* by the gospel.

Next, the *doctrines*, which he taught, were all plain facts—God is a spirit—God sent his son into the world, that the world through him might be saved—Moses wrote of me—He that believeth on him, that sent me, is passed from death unto life—The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God—The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment—The righteous shall go into life eternal—My kingdom is not of this world—The merciful are happy—Happy are the pure in heart—Few find the narrow way, that leadeth to life—Many go in at the wide gate, that leadeth to destruction.—All these, and many more of the same kind, are facts plain and true, and they were the simple truths, which Jesus Christ chose to teach.

Thirdly, the *motives*, which he employed to give his doctrine energy, were not taken from sinful secular things ; but it was urged home in its truth and importance. This fact is *true*, and THEREFORE you ought to believe it, whether the world admit it or not. That duty is *important* to your health, to your property, to your comfort, to your salvation, to your pleasing God, and, THEREFORE you ought to perform it, whether the world perform it or not.

The *tempers*, in which he executed his ministry, were the noblest, that can be conceived. He was humble, compassionate, firm, disinterested, and generous. He displayed, in all the course of his ministry, such an assortment of properties as obliged some of his auditors to burst into exclamatory admiration.



miration, *blessed are the paps, which thou hast sucked!* others to hang upon his lips, wondering at *the gracious words, that proceeded out of his mouth,* and all to acknowledge, *never man spake like this man!* This was not a temporary tide of popularity, it was admiration founded on reason, and all ages since have admired and exclaimed in like manner.

Add to these the simplicity and majesty of his style, the beauty of his images, the alternate softness and severity of his address, the choice of his subjects, the gracefulness of his deportment, the indefatigableness of his zeal . . . . where shall I put the period? his perfections are inexhaustible, and our admiration is everlasting. The character of Christ is the best book a preacher can study.

In order to mortify human vanity, to convince the world that religion was a plain simple thing, and that a little common sense accompanied with an honest good heart was sufficient to propagate it, without any aid derived from the cabinets of princes, or the schools of human science, he took twelve poor illiterate men into his company, admitted them to an intimacy with himself, and, after he had kept them a while in tuition, sent them to preach the good tidings of salvation to their countrymen. A while after he sent seventy more, and the discourses, which he delivered to each class at their ordination, are made up of the most wise and benevolent sentiments, that ever fell from the mouth of man. All the topicks are pure theology, and all unpolled with puerile conceits, human politicks, literary dreams, ecclesiastical traditions, party disputes, and all the other disgraces of preaching, which those sanctimonious hypocrites,

hypocrites, scribes, and pharisees, and pretended doctors and rabbies had introduced into it.

Jesus Christ had never paid any regard to the *place*, where he delivered his sermons; he had taught in the temple, the synagogues, publick walks, and private houses; he had preached on mountains, and in barges and ships. His missionaries imitated him, and convenience for the time was consecration of the place. He had been equally indifferent to the *posture*, he stood, or sat, as his own ease and the popular edification required. The *time* also had been accommodated to the same end. He had preached early in the morning, late in the evening, on sabbath days and festivals, and whenever else the people had leisure and inclination to hear. It had been foretold, the Messiah should *not lift up, nor cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets*, that is, should not use the artifices of those, who sought for popularity. It should seem, Jesus Christ used very little action: but that little was just, natural, grave, and expressive. He sometimes wept, and always felt: but he never expressed his emotions in a theatrical manner, much less did he preach as a drowsy pedant declaims, who has no emotions to express.

The success, that accompanied the ministry of our Emanuel, was truly astonishing. My soul overflows with joy, my eyes with tears of pleasure, while I transcribe it. When this Sun of righteousness arose with healing under his wings, the disinterested populace, who lay all neglected and forlorn, benighted with ignorance and benumbed with vice, saw the light, and hailed the brightness of its rising. Up they sprang, and after him in multitudes men, women, and children went: Was he

he to pass a road, they climbed the trees to see him, yea the blind sat by the way side to hear him go by. Was he in a house, they unroofed the building to come at him. As if they could never get near enough to hear the soft accents of his voice, they pressed, they crowded, they trod upon one another to surround him. When he retired into the wilderness, they thought him another Moses, and would have made him a king. It was the finest thing they could think of. He, greater than the greatest monarch, despised worldly grandeur: but to fulfil prophecy, sitting upon a borrowed ass's colt, rode into Jerusalem *the Son of the Highest*, and allowed the transported multitude to strew the way with garments and branches, and to arouse the insensible metropolis by acclamations, the very children shouting, *Hosannah! Hosannah in the highest! Hosannah to the son of David! Blessed be he, that cometh in the name of the Lord!*

The Rabbies pretended, the populace *knew not the law, and were cursed*, and it is certain they knew not those *glosses* of the law, which traditionists affected to teach: but this ignorance was their happiness. It would have been well for the teachers, had they never known them. The populace did know the *law*, and often quoted it in its true sense. What mystery is there in the ten commandments! or what erudition is requisite to determine, whether he, who opened the eyes of the blind, were a worshipper of God, or a sinner! It is a high privilege of poverty, that it is a state *dé-gagé*, disengaged, detached, unbiassed, and nearest of all others to *free inquiry*. The populace are not worth poisoning by ecclesiastical quacks, for they cannot pay for the drugs. Their senses of seeing and



and hearing, their faculties of observing, reflecting, and reasoning, are all as equal to *religious* topicks as those of their superiors, and more so, because unsophisticated. If they apply themselves to examine, their attestation is a high degree of probability, if not a demonstration. It was gloriously said by a blind beggar to a bench of curmudgeons, *Why! herein is a marvellous thing, that ye, with all your great books and broad phylacteries, long titles and hard names, wise looks and academical habits, know not whence Jesus is, and yet he hath opened my eyes. Now we, we blind beggars, we curled people, who know not the law, we who are altogether born in sin, we know that God beareth not sinners. . . If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.*

- (6) This popularity, obtained by publick preaching supported by a course of beneficent actions, many of which were miraculous, excited the envy of the leading churchmen, and they determined to destroy Jesus. They dare not appeal to the people, his constant auditors and companions: but they pretended loyalty to Cæsar, and love to their country, and taxed the PRINCE OF PEACE with *stirring up sedition*. We know the issue. Let us draw a veil over this horrid part of the history of mankind, and let us pass on to the principal object of our attention.

Jesus Christ taught no secrets, and he had commanded his apostles to publish upon the house tops what they had heard in private conversation. He charged them not to decline the publick preaching of the divine word after his death: but

to

to preach it to every creature. He promised them extraordinary assistance for this extraordinary work, and he fulfilled his promise, and exceeded their expectations, about six weeks after his crucifixion.

The birth, life, doctrine, example, miracles, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ made a large addition to the old subjects of preaching. The old œconomy was a rude delineation, the new was a finished piece. It was no new doctrine, it was an old plan brought to perfection, and set in finished excellence to last for ever. It was the religion of love to God and man made obvious and universal.

Christ, in the course of his ministry, had likened publick preaching to a concert of musick, the grave deep tones of John the baptist were all in perfect harmony with the soft and lively airs of his successors; a method of instruction contemned by the partial: but justified by the sons of true wisdom. Agree- (7)  
ably to this notion, he gave the holy Spirit so as to form a variety of perfect preachers, each excelling in his own sphere. James and John were *sons of thunder*. Barnabas was a *son of consolation*. Peter (8) was formed to preach to Jews, and Paul to convict (9) and convert Gentiles. By this admirable œco- (1)  
nomy *the wolf dwelt with the lamb, the leopard lay down with the kid; the calf, the young lion, and the fatling associated together, and a little child might have led them*. Assuredly they, who have made them- (2)  
selves standards of excellence, and have required of all others uniformity to themselves, have neither  
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(7) Mat. xi. 17, &c. (8) Mark iii. 17. (9) Acts iv. 36.  
(1) Gal. ii. 7, 8. (2) Isaiah xi. 6.

understood the world of nature nor the œconomy of redemption.

The apostles exactly copied their divine master. They confined their attention to religion, and left the schools to dispute, and politicians to intrigue. Their doctrines were a set of facts of two sorts. The first were within every man's observation, and they appealed for the truth of them to common sense and experience. The others were facts, which from their nature could be known only by testimony. To the truth of these they bore witness, and avowed the credibility of their evidence. The first required reasoning, the last faith. These doctrines they supported entirely by evidence, and neither had, nor required, such assistance as human laws or worldly policy, the eloquence of the schools or the terror of arms, the charms of money or the tricks of tradesmen could afford them. Their gospel was a simple tale, that any honest man might tell. As to all the circumstantial of publick preaching, time, place, gesture, style, habits, and so on, it was their glory to hold these indifferent, and to be governed in their choice by a supreme attention to general edification.

Great was the success of these venerable men. Their services were highly acceptable to God, to whom they were *a sweet savour of Christ*; they diffused the knowledge of him in *every place*, and he made them *always triumph in Christ*, he opened doors, (3) into which they entered, and *preached Christ's gospel*. They formed multitudes of religious societies, called churches, and they had the pleasure of seeing them choose from among themselves honest and able men to preach the divine word, and to administer



nister the standing ordinances of Jesus Christ, in the absence, and after the death of the apostles. These were called *bishops*, inspectors, or *seers*, as the old prophets were, and he, who wants to be informed that this primitive brother was not a lord in lawn, wants at the same time to be told, that if a child want *bread* his parent should not give him a *stone*, if he wish for *fish*, he should not be mortified with a *scorpion*.

The high esteem, in which christians held the apostles, excited the envy of bad men, and they presently poured themselves into christian churches to share the benefits. These acted over again the part of the old false prophets, and they were treated by the apostles as the true prophets had treated the former impostors. They foresaw, however, and foretold, that men of this sort, after their decease, would prostitute religion to worldly purposes, and associate the spirit of the devil with the profession of christianity. They knew the weakness of some pious men, and the desperate projects of the wicked. They remembered the state of the Mosaiical œconomy, and they recollected the prophecies of their divine master. They, therefore, apprized succeeding christians of their danger, by describing the men, by directing the servants of Christ to adhere to the written word, and whenever apostates should arrive at power enough to set up ANOTHER STANDARD OF FAITH AND MANNERS, to withdraw from them. They assured them, they (4) would be persecuted: but they charged them to

e 2

stand

(4) *These things teach. . . If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . from such WITHDRAW thyself. 1 Tim. vi. 3. 6. 2 Thess. iii. 6.*

- stand firmly in christian liberty, and to hold fast both
- (5) the FAITH and the PROFESSION of it, and they promised them the presence, the blessing, and the support of God. They never so much as hinted, that the church might let itself to the state, that any had a right to give laws to conscience, to appoint ceremonies of divine worship, and to enforce both by penal sanctions: but, considering Christ as having *finished* his religious plan, charged their successors to *keep what they had committed to their trust unspotted and unrebukeable until the second appearing of Jesus*
- (6) *Christ*. The longest liver of these inspired men described in bold allegorical style, like that of the old prophets, the nature and duration of the apostacy, and closed the holy canon by threatening all,
- (7) who should increase or diminish the divine word.

Here we are arrived at that part of the history of publick preaching, at which a consistent christian, especially an uniform protestant, ought to pause, in order to form a just notion of the perfection of the pulpit. Here we have the whole of the revealed will of God, the whole body of christian science, consequently, a perfect preacher, whatever opinions and doctrines he may hereafter meet with in the future history of preaching, will think himself *thoroughly furnished unto every good work*, although he disbelieve them all. Future preachers may be counsel on different sides of questions, which may arise: but not a soul of them may give law. No mortal may hereafter ascend an eminence, and say, You have heard the gospel say so and so: but I say the direct contrary.

Here we have all the genuine motives and supports

(5) Heb. iv. 14. x. 23. (6) 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14.

(7) Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

ports of the sacred system; truth supported by reason and argument, christian institutes maintained by motives pure and christian like themselves, consequently, a perfect preacher, how zealous soever he may be to propagate christianity, will not think himself authorized either to exchange these motives for others of a secular kind, or to incorporate these, which have been tried and found to be *mighty through God to bring every thought into obedience to Christ*, with such as support civil states and trading companies. Should future history shew him a set of men rising up in the church, and procuring from kings charters to empower them to trade in divinity, and assigning them a set of opinions as a company's stock to traffick with, he would not think himself obliged to pawn his soul to raise a sum, that might enable him to buy in and traffick too.

Here, in the doctrine of CHRIST, is *all* the message, and in the example of CHRIST the only *right* manner of delivering it. Passion may think the system wants heat—Pride may imagine it wants ornaments—blind zeal may suppose it wants power—the voluptuous may say, It is not pleasure—black robes may declare it is not learned—long robes may vow it is not law—there may be found coxcombs or lunaticks, who may deny it even common sense—yea knaves or idiots may take heart and call it a cheat—But what says the cool consistent christian? What have thousands of such men said? Why they have surveyed the christian religion neat as it came out of the hands of its divine creator, Christ the Lord of this new world, and proclaimed, *Behold! it is very good! Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge!*

Give



*Give glory to God*, revealed religion resembles the natural world, each came from the same wisdom, and each is analogous to the other, *perfect and entire, and lacking nothing*.

The apostles being dead, every thing came to pass exactly as they had foretold. The whole christian system underwent a miserable change, preaching shared the fate of other institutions, and this glory of the primitive church was turned into a lie. The degeneracy, however, was not immediate, it was slow and gradual, and brought on by degrees, just as a modest youth becomes a profligate man.

Before any man takes up the writings of those uninspired authors, whom we call FATHERS, it would be well to read S. Luke's introduction to his gospel. *Many have taken in hand to set forth . . . a declaration of those things, which are most surely believed among us . . . but it seemed good to me . . . having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee, in order, most excellent Theophilus*. It seems, the love of writing, and of becoming authors early possessed some good christians, who had not a *perfect* understanding of the subjects, of which they wrote. "We certainly believe the principal articles, which they declare: but not as *they* declare them. I write that thou mayest *know the certainty* of those things; for they describe them so as to render them doubtful." We take no notice of the force of the original terms; it is plain, this is the general meaning of the Evangelist.

Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenæus, and other fathers nearest the times of the apostles were writers of this kind. Clement of Alexandria

was

was a very good man, he preached to the church, and taught school, and his *miscellanies* may fairly (7) stand for a pattern of the whole; christianity is there: but how sadly mixed and mismatched with pagan philosophy and Jewish allegory, the thunders of an apostle with the squibs of an enthusiast! The partiality of a scholar for his tutor, the love of a profelyte for his casuist, and a thousand other incidents may have preserved old letters and papers, which charity would have buried in oblivion, into which, in all probability, the manly works of some primitive bishops have sunk.

Some wished to convert pagan philosophers, they, therefore, philosophized too, and proved Moses and Christ, by Sophocles and Plato. Others longed for Jewish profelytes; the Jews loved allegory; christianity then was allegorized. Some endeavoured to convert the pagan populace; the populace loved finery; the ceremonies of christianity, then, were adorned. Others hoped to recommend religion to gentry; the pulpit, then, was set by the laws of the theatre, went by the rhetorick of Aristotle, and was known to be good by keeping time with the maxims of Tully. This was a degradation of the wisdom of God unworthy of men, who sincerely believed the spirituality and divinity of the word of God. With these premonitions, we look into the churches after the death of the apostles.

It must be allowed, in general, that the simplicity of christianity was maintained, though under gradual decay, during the first three centuries. Christians assembled on the first day of the week  
for

for publick worship. Prayer was offered to the deity in the name of Jesus Christ. Psalms and hymns were sung in praise of God the creator, the preserver, and redeemer of men. The sacred writings were read. The word of God was preached, its doctrines explained, and its duties enforced. The ignorant were classed in societies and instructed. They, who understood the doctrine of Christ, were admitted members of the church by baptism on their own profession of faith and repentance. The death of Christ was commemorated as he had appointed. The churches, having no other support, rested wholly upon religious principle, and the chief attention of the bishops and teachers was to disseminate that; consequently, publick preaching was frequent, plain, popular, and powerful; and although there are many exceptions, especially among the Origenists, yet during this period christianity made a rapid and extensive progress, and its success was wholly owing to instruction supported by argument and example.

The next five centuries produced many pious and excellent preachers, both in the Latin and Greek churches. The doctrine, however, continued to degenerate, and the pulpit, along with all other institutes, degenerated with it. It is impossible, in this sketch, to investigate particulars: we will just take a cursory general view.

The Greek pulpit was adorned with some eloquent orators. Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea, John Chrysostom, preacher at Antioch, and afterwards patriarch (as he was called) of Constantinople, and Gregory Nazianzen, who all flourished in the fourth century, seem to have led the fashion of preaching



preaching in the Greek church. Jerom and Augustine did the same in the Latin church. Had the excellencies only of these great men been imitated by their contemporaries and successors, the imitators would have been competent orators: but very far from able ministers of the New Testament: but their very defects were adopted as pulpit endowments.

The Greeks called sermons *Homilies*, that is, publick discourses spoken to the *common people*. (8) The Latins named them at first *tracts*, or treatises, that is, publick discourses in which subjects were stated, argued, and thoroughly *discussed*; afterward they called them sermons, or *speeches*, perhaps some sermons were nothing more! (9)

Preaching was not originally assigned to any particular order of men: but in this period the pulpit was thought worth inclosing, and monopolizers were ready to rent and improve it. Jesus Christ was of the tribe of *Judah*, of which tribe *Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood*: yet it was (1) his custom to read and expound in a synagogue every Sabbath day. When *Paul and Barnabas went* (2) *into the synagogue at Antioch on the Sabbath day and sat down, after the reading of the law and the prophets*, THE RULERS of the synagogue sent to intreat them to preach, with which complaisant invitation Paul instantly complied. When Christian assemblies first met, *all*, who had ability, might preach (3) one

(8) Ομιλία ab ομιλος multitudo-vulgus-plebs.

(9) August. *Tractatus* in Joan.—Gaudent. Brixiens. Episc. *Tractatus* varii.——Victor utic. Lib. i.——Vincent. Lerin. c. xl.

(1) Heb. vii. 14. (2) Luke iv. 15, 16. (3) Acts xiii. 14, 15.

(4) one by one. Yea, the very women under both œconomies prophesied, that is, uttered in publick the highest sort of instruction by preaching. The latter was prohibited by the apostle of the Gentiles for excellent reasons : but it is yet supposed by some christians to have been only a local or temporary prohibition. Let me have the honour of saying one word here, by way of apology for the preaching part of the fair sex. They revere the authority of S. Paul : but they understand him, with some expositors, in that sense, which best agrees with their inclination to please the other sex by chatting. They say, Gentlemen in lawns and gowns and hoods, and rings and roses and trinkets, clad in the attire, and displaying the delicacy of ladies in the pulpit, excited in them a strong prejudice in favour of female claim. They say, a congregation consisting of twelve frequently contains ten of their sex, and where an unpensioned majority is for them, who shall be against them ! Beside, they are provoked to speak, for they are wearied with listening year after year to what is not worth hearing. They add, they are able at all adventures, to put a priest in petticoats to the blush, by contrasting their usurpations with his, as, for example, their harmless pulpit lectures with his grave definitions and investigations begun with a religious oath, and finished with a canonical curse. We have prated, say they, but never persecuted : tattled nonsense, but shed no human blood : beside, to make a lady head of the church, and yet deny the sex the liberty of preaching to the members, is genuine rectified spirit of mystery.

To

To return: For some time preaching was common to bishops, elders, deacons, and private brethren in the primitive church: in process, it was restrained to the bishop, and to such as he should appoint. They called the appointment ordination, and at last attached I know not what ideas of mystery and influence to the word, and of dominion to the bishop, who pronounced it. The word *ordain* was originally equal to *appoint*, and if twenty christians nominated a man to instruct them once, the man was appointed or ordained a preacher for the time. If they requested him to continue to instruct them, he was reputed to be ordained or appointed their minister in future, as long as they pleased. These nominations were accompanied with prayer, and sometimes with the blessing and good wishes of the seniors, expressed by the old custom of laying the hand upon the head. From these simple transactions came in process of time a longer train of absurdities than I have room to relate.

(5)

When a bishop or preacher travelled, he claimed no authority to exercise the duties of his function, unless he were invited by the churches, where he attended publick worship. The primitive churches had no idea of a bishop at Rome presuming to dictate to a congregation in Africa. Nothing, however, was more common than such friendly visits and sermons as were then in practice. The churches thought them edifying. In case

(5) Orig. Hom. i. in Psal. 37.—Hieron. Epist. ad Nep.—Chrysof. Hom. De incompreh. Deo. De Anathem. adv. Judæos.—Euseb. Hist. lib. vi. c. 19.—See Acts vi. 5, &c. xxi. 8.



- case the bishop were sick, or absent, one of the  
 (6) deacons, or sometimes a short-hand writer used to read a homily, that had been preached, and perhaps published by some good minister, and sometimes a homily, that had been preached by the  
 (7) bishop of the church.

We have great obligations to primitive notaries, for they very early addressed themselves to take down the homilies of publick preachers. Sometimes the hearers employed them, sometimes the preachers, and sometimes themselves. For this purpose they carried writing tablets waxed, and styles, that is, pointed irons, or gravers, into the assembly, and stood round the preacher to record what he said. It was a character to a publick speaker to be attended by these scribes; for primitive christians, never complaisant in matters of conscience, would not give themselves the trouble of taking down the sermons of a patriarch, if they did not like his preaching. They say no body would write after Atticus, patriarch of Constantinople; for, though he had a great name, he was accounted but an indifferent preacher. The people thought once hearing enough of all conscience for a bad sermon. From the labours of these men,  
 (8) we derive many a huge folio.

What

(6) *Communio peregrina.* Albaspin. *Obs. Ecclesiast.* l. i. 3.—Euseb. v. 23.—*Constit. Apol.* l. ii. 62.

(7) *Synod. Valens. Can.* iv. Si quis episcopus, vel presbyter ob infirmitatem ipse prædicare non possit, a *diaconis* in ecclesia homiliæ patrum recitentur.—Assistenti plebi est per *notarium* expositio recitata. *Græg. M. in prolog. Homil.*

(8) Euseb. lib. vi. 22.—Gaudent. Brix. *Tractatus* (xvii.) quem *quorundam civium* notarii exceperunt.—Sozom. *Hist.* l. viii. 27.—August. *Serm.* vi. de sanctis.

What a multitude of not impertinent questions might be asked here ! Can we ascertain the motives of all these writers ?—Can we tell which are corrected copies ?—Is it quite fair to determine the whole character of a preacher by one extempore effusion ?—Were none of the writers in a hurry to get his own copy first to market, and are the most quick always the most correct ?—Are we sure the preacher spoke clearly, and had no hoarseness, no cold, no impediment ?—Can we answer for the writer's quick hearing, or the people's silence ? Fathers have been quoted as scripture : but scripture was not taken thus. They have been alledged in proof of every thing, and well they might ! If the populace then resembled the populace now, the most nonsensical sermons were the most saleable.

The deacons placed themselves round the pulpit, and before sermon one of them cried with a loud voice, *Silence—bearken*—or something similar. This was repeated often, if necessary ; I suppose at proper pauses, when the preacher stopped. (9) Their manners were different from ours : but really our manners want some of their customs. It might do some drowsy folks good to be alarmed every five or ten minutes with—*Mind what you are about—Let us listen—Attend to the word of God.*

Some affirm, that all the primitive bishops preached in a gown, or a surplice, or a something, which Eusebius calls, *πῆλαλον*, and which he says, S. John being a priest wore. Had S. John thought *πῆλαλον* necessary to a good sermon, he would

(9) Chrysost. Hom. Act. xix.—Clem. Constit. Apol. viii. 15.

would have left in his writings some direction how God, who enjoined it, chose to have it made. The directions of Moses for the habits of Aaron are so plain, that any habit-maker could work by them to this day: but as for the apostle's *πεῖλαλον*, we know nothing about it. Eusebius picked up a scrap of a letter of one Polycrates, there he found *πεῖλαλον*, and there we leave it. It is not improbable, that some good preachers might not have cloaths fit to appear in, especially the itinerant brethren, such as the apostles, and others after them, who travelled and preached. Would it be wonderful, if a congregation had kept a decent clean habit, that would cover all, for the use of such poor men as came among them! The surplice was copied from the Jewish worship, and was ordered to be worn by all, who officiated in sacred things: but this was in the latter part of this period, when preachers were become priests in name, and princes in fact.

The fathers differed much in pulpit action, the greater part used very moderate and sober gesture. Paul of Samoseta used to stamp with his foot, and strike his thigh with his hand, and throw himself into violent agitations: but he was blamed for it (1) by his contemporaries. They thought his action theatrical, and improper in a church; and yet in every church the people were allowed and even exhorted to applaud the preacher by shouting and clapping their hands at the close of a period, as at the theatre, or in the forum. The first preachers delivered their sermons all extemporé, and they studied, while they preached, the countenances of their auditors, to see whether the doctrine were understood.

(1) Euseb. vii. 29.



derstood. The people endeavoured to express their sentiments, most likely at first by a look, a nod, a shake of the head, or a lifting of the hand. At length this rose up to loud acclamations and clappings; and the preachers perceiving the abuse preached it down.

(2)

Paul of Samoseta used to scold at the people, when they did not shout and applaud him. It happened often their applause was no praise. They applauded what they did not understand. Austin one day proposed a question to himself to answer in preaching. The answer might have deserved applause had he given it: but the congregation fell a shouting at the question, before they knew whether he could answer it properly. . . . *Hey-day—said he—what are you praising? . . . Do ye know what I was saying? . . . I only proposed a question, and you go to clapping and shouting!* Jerom tells us, he once asked his tutor, Gregory Nazianzen, what S. Luke meant by δευτερον πρωτον. (*the second sabbath after the first.* Luke vi. 1.) Gregory replied, *I will tell you to-morrow, when I am preaching in the church. When all the congregation are shouting and clapping their hands, you will be obliged to profess to understand what I say, though you do not comprehend it, for if you do not clap your hands and shout too, they will all condemn you for a fool.*

(3)

Sermons in those days were all in the vulgar tongue. The Greeks preached in Greek, the Latins in Latin, for the preachers meant to be understood. They did not preach by the clock (so to speak.) but were short or long as they saw occasion.

(2) Jer. ad Nep. 2. Aug. Civ. Dei. l. iv. c. 16. 24. Chrysost. Hom. in Act. xxxviii. In Act. iii. Ad pop. Ant. xxxviii. (3) Hieron. ad Nep. 2.

sion. Augustine used to leave off when the people's hearts seemed properly affected with the subject. He judged of this sometimes by their shouting, and at other times by their tears. Their sermons were usually about an hour long: but many of them may be deliberately pronounced in (4) half an hour, and several in less time.

Sermons were generally both preached and heard standing: but sometimes both speaker and auditors sat, especially the aged and infirm. Their methods were on some occasions what we call expounding from several verses, on others preaching from a single passage. In many things they imitated the Jews, by adapting parts of scripture to particular seasons, and hence in time came the appointment of select portions for Easter, Whitsuntide, and other festivals. The Jews read in their synagogues Ruth at Pentecost, Ecclesiastes at the feast of Tabernacles, and Solomon's Song at the Passover. The fathers were fond of allegory, for Origen, that everlasting allegorizer, had set them the example. I hope they had better proofs of the canonicalness of Solomon's Song than I have had the pleasure of seeing: In general, their sermons were paraphrastical, regular and textual, going from psalm to psalm, from chapter to chapter, through whole books: but they made no scruple, when occasion offered, to defer the regular subject, and to choose a text on the spot, suited to any case, that happened even after they were in the assembly, yea after they had ascended the pul- (5) pit, and even after they had read the text. It should seem, the preacher either held the holy scripture

(4) S. Basil. Orat. in S. Bapt. (5) Chrysost. apud Socrat. lib. vi. cap. 3. August. de Civ. Dei, xxii. 8.

scripture in his hand, or had it lying before him on the desk. Before preaching he usually went into a vestry to pray, and afterward to speak to such as came to salute him. He prayed with his eyes shut in the pulpit immediately before preaching, and often in difficult parts of his sermon while he delivered it. The first word the preacher uttered to the people when he ascended the pulpit was—*Peace be with you, or The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all*, to which the assembly at first added *Amen*, and in after times they answered, *And with thy spirit*.

Most of the sermons of these days are divisible into three general parts. The first is a short introduction, the second an exposition of the text, and the last a moral exhortation arising out of the discussion. After sermon the speaker descended, and prayed at the communion table, on which the good people laid their alms for the poor. Funeral sermons were frequent, and, through the imprudent use of rhetorical figures, hurtful in the issue to the doctrine of pure christianity. Some bishops preached every day during Lent, some twice a day, others twice a week. Some delivered evening lectures, and all preached on the Lord's day, the first day of the week.

In this period many noble places of worship were built. The old Jewish temple was the original, the rest were all taken from it. We have felt the misery of abridging all along: but here it will be less obscure to omit than to abridge. Let it, then, suffice to observe, that a cathedral was an imitation of the temple, and a village place of worship of a synagogue. Hence the idea of a holy



end for an altar and a circle of priests, and an unhallowed end for the common people. Hence the divisions of porches, choirs, chancels, and so on, answering to the courts of the temple. The *ambo*, or pulpit, was in the choir. Some were portable, and very plain; others fixtures, stretching out lengthwise, so that the preacher might walk up and down in them; some had seats and curtains, others were adorned with gold and silver, and resembled the thrones of princes more than scaffolds for the convenience of christian ministers. So says Eusebius, censuring the vanity of Paul of Samoseta. Hence came our modern cathedrals and parish churches, our choirs, and altars, and stalls, and thrones in places of worship. Many of our churches and chapels are very inconvenient to preach in. They were not erected for schools of instruction: but for saying mass and sacrificing, and where the pulpit should be there stands an old table covered with finery, and called an altar. In many places, the priest preaches from the middle of a side wall, or a pillar, to the backs and shoulders of his audience, for the pews were placed with a view to the altar, where formerly brother *Mumpsimus* used to play tricks, and not to the pulpit, where now a wise and good minister stands and preaches to a people, in search, it should seem by their looking to the old spot, for their former guides. How long shall we sacrifice manly advantages to puerile popish baubles!

Degenerate as these days were, compared with those of the apostles, they were golden ages in comparison with the times that followed. Some taught what they called *positive theology*, that is to say, compilations of theological opinions, collected  
from

from scripture, and fathers, and councils. Others went into *scholastical divinity*, that is, confused and metaphysical reasonings, by which they pretended to explain the doctrines of religion. A third sort were all taken up with contemplations and inward feelings, and their divinity was *mysticism*. Even these were preferable to others, who read the categories of Aristotle, or the life of a saint, in the church, instead of a sermon, and who turned the church, I will not say into a theatre, but into a booth at a country fair. The pulpit became a stage, where ludicrous priests obtained the vulgar laugh by the lowest kind of dirty wit, especially at the festivals of Christmas and Easter. One of our old historians says, *The devil was so pleased with the preachers of the eleventh century, that he sent them a letter of thanks from hell for the advantages, which his kingdom derived from their pulpits.* (6)

Were I to attempt a history of any one christian ordinance, as of singing, prayer, preaching, baptism, and so on, I would take the old testament history of the *church* for my model. The true church of God is the object in contemplation, this is followed from family to family, from country to country, through Egypt, Babylon, Israel, and Judah. The ten tribes, called Israel, go off at a certain period, and are absolutely lost to all future historians. The sacred writers were not compiling a history of *Israel*: but a history of the *religion* in Israel; and when Israel apostatized, the historians left them, and followed religion. On this principle, I should quit the beaten road of what is called *church* history, and should go into the histories of Paulicians, Albigenes, Waldenses, Beghards,

Feghards, and other reputed hereticks under persecution, and there perhaps I might find what I sought, the *ordinance* in question in its native purity. Popes, and councils, and secular churchmen, should only appear incidentally, just as Amalekites and other troops of banditti in Jewish history, coming up at harvest time to rob the good people of their corn. What care I where apostates hold a council, or who presides there, or what they quarrel about? What is it to me who ordained this superstition, or who introduced that? All may be entertaining and curious: but it is not a history of *the church*. Modern papists consider the reformation as a heresy and a schism, and with much greater reason may we consider their corporation in the same light.

To apply this to our subject. Suppose we were writing an accurate history of the ministration of *the divine word* by publick preaching, we should trace the subject till we came to a period where legends, politicks, and superstitions were publickly preached. Should we continue to pursue the domineering party, we should be obliged to write a history, then, of the publick preaching of *errors*: but we ought to be writing a history of preaching *the divine word*, and consequently our plan would oblige us to go off with the people, who continued to preach it after it was discarded.

This track is more necessary in a history of *preaching* to be pursued; than in a history of baptism, or any other single ordinance; for the *word* of  
of

(7) Judges vi. *So it was, when Israel had sown, . . . that the children of the east came up against them, . . . they and their camels without number, . . . and destroyed the increase of the earth, . . . and left no sustenance for Israel.*



of God was originally given for a standard of faith and practice; where this standard has been preserved, there faith and practice have been in general kept pure, and where other standards have been set up, although some one ordinance may have been preserved pure, (which by the way has not been the case) yet it must have been an accidental, and not a constitutional purity, and so of little value to purity, and of none to the history of it. Pulpits are publick tell-tales, and a senseless tale they tell, when they are the mouth of a faction! A collection and repetition of these tales is not a history of *the ministration of* THE DIVINE WORD.

All our divines affirm, all our historians prove, and the church of Rome does not deny, that there have been from the days of the apostles various DISSENTERS from all established corporations called churches. They have been loaded with innumerable calumnies, recorded under odious names, taxed with holding detestable errors, and branded with publick infamy: but, at the reformation, these dissenters were traced, brought out of obscurity, washed and new clothed, and produced as evidences upon the trial of the question, *Where was your church before Luther?*

I have seen enough to convince me, that the present English Dissenters, contending for the sufficiency of scripture, and for primitive christian liberty to judge of its meaning, may be traced back in authentick manuscripts to the Non-conformists, to the Puritans, to the Lollards, to the Vallenises, to the Albigenes, and I suspect through the Paulicians, and others to the Apostles. These churches had sometimes a clandestine existence, and at other times a visible, I wish I could say a legal one: but

at

at all times they held more truth, and less error than the prevailing factions, that persecuted them. One branch uniformly denied the baptism of infants, all allowed christian liberty, and all were enemies to an established hierarchy reigning over the consciences of their brethren. I have now before me a manuscript register of Gray bishop of Ely, which proves, that in the year 1457, there was a congregation of this sort in this village, Chesterton, where I live, who privately assembled for divine worship, and had preachers of their own, who taught them the very doctrine, which now we preach. Six of them were accused of heresy before the tyrant of the district, and condemned to abjure heresy, and to do penance, half naked, with a faggot at their backs, and a taper in their hands, in the publick market places of Ely, and Cambridge, and in the church-yard of Great Swaffham. It was pity the poor souls were forced to abjure the twelfth article of their accusation, in which they are said to have affirmed, *All priests, and people in orders, are incarnate devils!*

A hundred such instances may be produced, a thousand curious anecdotes of the manners of our ancestors, of their language, books, utensils, habits, reasoning, and rhetoric, might incidentally furnish amusement and instruction to us, and nothing would be found easier to industry, than to connect their ecclesiastical œconomy with that of the above-mentioned antelutheran protestants. We are

(8) Art. XII. Item, quod papa est antichristus, et sacerdotes sunt ejus discipuli, et omnes ordinati sunt diaboli incarnati.—XI. Item, quod extrema unctio, anglice *gresyng*, minime proficit.—III. Item, quod puer . . . nec egeat, nec baptizari debeat. &c. &c.—*Reg. Eliens. Gul. Gray. MSS.*

are far from justifying their mistakes, and approving in the gross: but we know popish records are everlasting calumnies, and the history of the *christian* pulpit is among the people, whom they calumniate.

I see a thousand benefits arising to religion at large from the pursuit of this method, and I will venture to name one. It is generally allowed, that toleration is a high excellence in a system of civil polity, and that christian liberty in the church is analogous to it: but it is almost as generally supposed, that our ancestors were all ignorant of it, and that Sidney, Milton, Locke, and others of our late philosophers and statesmen, first inculcated these laws of humanity, and incorporated what we have of them into our modern constitutions. What if we could prove, that Jesus Christ, whose profession was theology, taught the doctrine of christian liberty, and that he only taught in a clearer manner what had from the days of Enoch been held and taught in the primitive pulpits! What if we could prove, that from the days of the apostles, the most tolerant of mankind, the doctrine had been actually believed, taught and exemplified in every age till the reformation! What if we could prove, that the generous toleration of modern states was only the doctrine of christian liberty applied to secular affairs, and stood exactly in the same predicament in a treatise of government as natural religion stands in a system of modern theology, that is, a first principle of human felicity, discoverable by reason: but elucidated and improved by revelation! What if we could ascertain by good records, that difference in religious sentiments and practices made no difference in civil rights



rights and mutual esteem among whole sects and parties! What if we could shew, that religious uniformity was an illegitimate brat of the mother of harlots, and nothing akin to the Son of God! What if we could infer . . . Prosperity and peace be with any investigator! Alas! I must quit reveries, and go this afternoon to visit the sick, and preach in the evening to a part of my flock.

Before I go, however, I will finish this article by a remark, which will prove, I think, that this is not *all* reverie. The thirteenth article, objected against the forementioned Chesterton culprits by the bishop, in his consistory at Downham, is this. "Also, you affirm, that every man may be called a church of God, so that if any one of you should be summoned before his ecclesiastical judge, and should happen to be asked this question, Do you believe in the church? he may safely answer, he does, meaning that he believes in the church, because he believes the church is in every man, who is a temple of God." Now is not this affirming, that every good man was bound to follow his own judgment in religious matters, and not to be set down by the opinions of a domineering faction, calling themselves, *the church*? Is a man strong for being called Samson, or wise for naming himself Solomon? Does it not mean, that every man had as much right of judging in himself solely as the whole community had collectively? We could

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(9) Item, Quod quilibet homo dicitur ecclā Dei, adeo quod si quanquam illorum coram iudice ecclesiastico evocatum ad hanc questionem respondere contingeret, an in ecclā credis, tute tunc respondere posset quod sic, per hoc intelligens, quod in ecclā credit, quia in homine qui est templum Dei. — MSS. Ubi supra.

go further, and prove that these six men, altho' all in one community, did not all hold the same articles, some agreed to one, some to another: but they *all*, the register says, affirmed this *thirteenth* article. Does not this prove that their ecclesiastical œconomy allowed *christian liberty*, and that they held a *mixt* communion? . . . But I must go.

To return. The glorious reformation was the offspring of preaching, by which mankind were informed, there was a standard, and the religion of the times was put to trial by it. The avidity of the common people to read scripture, and to hear it expounded, was wonderful, and the papists were so fully convinced of the benefit of frequent publick instruction, that they, who were justly called *unpreaching prelates*, and whose pulpits, to use an expression of Latimer, had been *bells without clappers* for many a long year, were obliged for shame to set up regular preaching again.

The church of Rome has produced some great preachers, since the reformation; but not equal to the reformed preachers: and a question naturally arises here, which it would be unpardonable to pass over in silence, concerning the singular *effect* of the preaching of the reformed, which was general, national, universal reformation.

In the darkest times of popery there had arisen now and then some famous popular preachers, who had zealously inveighed against the vices of their times, and whose sermons had produced sudden and amazing effects on their auditors: but all these effects had died away with the preachers, who produced them, and all things had gone back into the old state. Law, learning, commerce, so-

ciety at large had not been improved. Here a new scene opens, preachers arise less popular, perhaps less indefatigable and exemplary, their sermons produce less striking immediate effects, and yet their auditors go away and agree by whole nations to reform.

Jerom Savonarola, Jerom Narni, Capistran, Connekte, and many others had produced by their sermons great immediate efforts. When Connekte preached, the ladies lowered their head-dresses, and committed quilled caps by hundreds to the flames. When Narni taught the populace in Lent from the pulpits of Rome, half the city went from his sermons crying along the streets, *Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us*, so that in only one passion week two thousand crowns worth of ropes were sold to make scourges with; and when he preached before the pope to cardinals and bishops, and painted the crime of non-residence in its own colours, he frightened thirty or forty bishops, who heard him, instantly home to their dioceses. In the pulpit of the university of Salamanca he induced eight hundred students to quit all worldly prospects of honour, riches, and pleasure, and to become penitents in divers monasteries. Some of this class were martyrs too. We know the fate of Savonarola, and more might be added: but all lamented the momentary duration of the effects produced by their labours. Narni himself was so disgusted with his office, that he renounced preaching, and shut himself up in his cell to mourn over his irreclaimable contemporaries, for bishops went back to court, and ropemakers lay idle again.

Our reformers taught all the good doctrines,  
which



which had been taught by these men, and they added two or three more, by which they laid the ax to the root of apostacy, and produced *general* reformation. Instead of appealing to popes, and canons, and founders, and fathers, they only quoted them, and referred their auditors to the holy scriptures for *law*. Pope Leo X. did not know this, when he told Prierio, who complained of Luther's heresy, *Friar Martin had a fine genius!* They also taught the people what little they knew of *christian liberty*, and so led them into a belief that they might follow their *own* ideas in religion without the consent of a confessor, a diocesan, a pope, or a council. They went further, and laid the stress of all religion on *justifying faith*. This obliged the people to get acquainted with Christ the object of their faith, and thus they were led into the knowledge of a character altogether different from what they saw in their old guides, a character, which it is impossible to know, and not to admire and imitate. The old papal popular sermons had gone off like a charge of gunpowder, producing only a fright, a bustle, and a black face: but those of the *newe learninge*, as the monks called them, were small hearty seeds, which, being sown in the honest hearts of the multitude, and watered with the dew of heaven, softly vegetated, and imperceptibly unfolded blossoms and fruits of inestimable value.

These eminent servants of Christ excelled in various talents, both in the pulpit, and in private. Knox came down like a thunder-storm, Calvin resembled a whole day's set rain, Beza was a shower of the softest dew. Old Latimer in a coarse frieze gown trudged a foot, his testament hanging at one

end of his leathern girdle, and his spectacles at the other, and without ceremony instructed the people in rustick style from a hollow tree; while the courtly Ridley in sattin and fur taught the same principles in the cathedral of the metropolis. Cranmer, though a timorous man, ventured to give the most powerful and lascivious tyrant of his time a new testament with the label, *whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*; while Knox, who said, *there was nothing in the pleasant face of a lady to as-fray him*, assured the Queen of Scots, that, “if there were any spark of the spirit of God, yea of honesty or wisdom in her, she would not be offended with his affirming in his sermons, that the diversions of her court were diabolical crimes, evidences of impiety or insanity.” These men were not all accomplished scholars: but they all gave proof enough, that they were honest, hearty, and disinterested in the cause of religion; and to these, and not to literary qualifications, all were indebted for popularity in the pulpit and publick confidence out of it. Happy had it been for succeeding ages had they been trusted less!

All Europe produced great and excellent preachers, and some of the more studious and sedate reduced their art of publick preaching to a system, and taught rules of a good sermon. Bishop Wilkins enumerated in 1646 upwards of sixty, who had written on the subject. I have endeavoured to procure a sight of all their books: but some few I have not been so happy as to find. Several of what I have seen are valuable treatises, full of edifying instructions; most of them are very small: but all, I think, are on a scale too large, and by affecting to treat of the whole office of a minister,  
leave

leave that capital branch, publick preaching, unfinished and vague.

One of the most important articles of pulpit science, that, which gives life and energy to all the rest, and without which all the rest are nothing but a vain parade, is either neglected or exploded in all these treatises. It is essential to the ministration of the divine word by publick preaching, that preachers be allowed to form principles of their own, and that their sermons contain their real sentiments, the fruits of their own intense thought and meditation. Preaching cannot be in a good state, in those communities, where the shameful traffick of buying and selling manuscript sermons is carried on. Moreover, all the animating encouragements, that arise from a free unbiassed choice of the people, and from their uncontaminated disinterested applause, should be left open to stimulate a generous youth to excel. Command a man to utter what he has no inclination to propagate, and what he does not even believe, threaten him at the same time with all the miseries of life, if he dare to follow his own ideas, and to promulge his own sentiments, and you pass a sentence of death on all he says. He does declaim: but all is languid and cold, and he lays his system out as an undertaker does the dead. Instead of referring him to those, who deal most in religion, and therefore best understand the value of every thing in it, the people I mean, give him to understand, that even their consent to be taught by him is not necessary to be obtained, and you instantly turn his eye from his bible, his people, and his God, and fix it on the seat of a patron, who must  
be



be approached by a circle of collusion and intrigue.

- These books consider the pulpit as the religious tribunal of the civil magistrate, preachers as servants of the crown, and preaching as a human art, a branch of rhetorick to be taught in the schools. In one thing they made it different from all other arts and sciences, these they considered as capable of improvement: but that they pretended was in a state of absolute perfection. Other sciences they left open, and would have laughed at a proposal to admit every future youth to study philosophy by swearing him to believe and maintain the ideas of Plato, to live in the faith and to die in the comfort of the speculations of Cicero, or the categories of Aristotle: but this science, religion, this, they said, an inhuman reprobate had begun, a sickly child improved, and a female tyrant completely finished off. This was going beyond a Cæsar, who thought *nihil actum dum aliquid agendum*, yea beyond an apostle, who exclaimed to his followers, *leaving rudiments let us go on unto perfection. Brethren, be ye followers of me. I count not myself to have apprehended: but this only have I attained, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things, which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus.*
- (1)
- (2)

This

(1) "Tu Elisabetha operi ab Henrico parenti feliciter *inchoato*, ab Edwardo fratre in immensum *aucto*, coronidem jam consummato imponeres. . . Pater *incepit* . . . adolescens *promovit* . . . filia *absolvit*." *Epist. Synod. Elizabet. Reg. Dat. Suecæ ex Frisiorum oppido, ex Synodo 22 Aprilis 1587. Fris. occid.*

(2) Heb. vi. 1. Phil. iii. 13, 14. 17.

This is the place, where, would our limits allow it, we should take our stand, and reconnoitre the reformed pulpit: but it shall suffice to observe, that in all reformed countries the pulpit was taken into the service of the state, and became a kind of attorney or solicitor general retained to plead for the crown. The proof of this lies in the articles, canons and injunctions, which were girded on the clergy of those times, and how thoroughly the state clergy have understood this to be the true condition of the pulpit, their sermons will abundantly prove. The best state instructions to preachers were given in the DIRECTORY by the assembly of divines: but even these include the great, the fatal error, the subjection of God's word to human law. If, when all other institutes were taken into the service of the state, the pulpit had escaped, it would have been wonderful indeed: but, if the pulpit be a *place*, and the preacher a *pensioner*, in the name of common sense, what are we to expect from both!

From this sad constitution we derive the lifelessness of later preaching. The ill fated youth before he is aware finds himself bound to teach the opinions of a set of ministers, who lived two hundred years before he was born. His masters believed their own articles, and therefore preached them with zeal: but it would be unreasonable to expect a like zeal in him for the same doctrines, for he does not know what they are, or, having examined them, he does not think them true, and thus subscription to other men's creeds becomes the death of good preaching.

With these principles I went about the following work, and for these reasons I have all through  
endeavoured

endeavoured to possess the mind of the candidate for the pulpit, with an abhorrence of dominion over conscience, and to excite him to enter into that religious liberty of thinking and acting, with which christianity hath made him free.

There were at the reformation a great number of wise and good men, who thought the revival of primitive christianity only begun at that period, and they endeavoured, though under great disadvantages, to improve these beginnings, and to go on unto perfection. Others have succeeded them, and entered into their pious views with disinterestedness and success. Among these the English protestant dissenters stand first in merit; and, as their congregations are constitutionally in possession of christian liberty, they have produced some of the greatest preachers in the world. It would be easy to give a long list of names from the dawn of the reformation to this day: but I sacrifice the pleasure of doing so to the modesty of my friends. This, however, I will venture to say, and *no man shall stop me of this boasting*, we have in our churches now exact copies of our ancient models. *The prophets, do they live for ever?* Yes, they do! *The spirit of Elijah rests upon Elisha!* The grave solidity of Cartwright and Jacob seemed to reside in Owens and Goodwins and Gills. The vivacity of Watts and Bradbury and Earle lives in others, whom I dare not name. The patient laborious Fox, the silver Bates, the melting Baxter, the piercing Mead, the generous Williams, the instructive Henry, the soft and candid Doddridge, Ridgley, and Gale, and Bunyan, and Burges, in all their variegated beauties yet flourish in our pulpits, exercising their different talents for mutual edification.



edification. We have Farnabas the son of consolation, and Boanerges the thunderer still. Ye servants of the most high God, who shew unto us the way of salvation! *Peace be within the walls of your churches, and prosperity within your . . . dwelling-houses. . .* You have no *palaces*, you need none, palaces can add nothing to you.

It would have been easy to have exemplified all the good rules of Mr. Claude from the printed discourses of these great men; but I have quoted very few of the sermons of our late ministers, and I think none of theirs, who are now alive. I would not willingly give a moment's pain to the modesty of persons, whom I so sincerely esteem. If I have at any time exemplified a fault exploded by Mr. Claude by a quotation from the sermons of men of great name in other communities, I hope, admirers of the preachers censured will believe me, when I assure them, I have taken a great deal of pains to avoid giving offence on this head. I have exemplified many pulpit vices from obscure preachers of no note, when I could have done it from the sermons of their popular contemporaries, who led for the time the pulpit fashion. The few examples I have given are none in comparison with the many I have left unnoticed.

Some of our brethren will complain that the notes are not all in *English*, and my reply is this—First, the *substance* of all is in English—Secondly, some must *not* be translated—Thirdly, most of these were intended for small exercises for studious *lads*, hoping they might be hereby allured to study the pulpit before they entered it—And lastly, if these be not sufficient reasons, I promise to make the complainant a present, if he will call

for it, of a beautiful copper-plate print of the old man, his son, and the afs, on condition he will get the rhymes at the bottom by heart.

Seriously, were I to follow the dictates of my own heart, I should throw myself at the feet of the meanest of my brethren, and beg pardon for presuming to seem to instruct those, who are appointed to instruct others, and who have so often edified me. I would confess, I saw innumerable errors in this work, for all which I could make only one apology, that is, that they were involuntary. I ask no pardon for expressing my abhorrence of intolerance. Always when I met it in a course of reading, I thought I met the great devil, and my resentment was never abated by his appearing in the habit of a holy man of God. I have sometimes allowed myself a little mirth in that awful science religion, and in the presence of that grave thing called a sermon: but *in this thing the Lord pardon his servant, that when my master went into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaned on my hand, and I bowed myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bowed myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon his servant in this thing!*

CHESTERTON,  
May 19, 1779.

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A N  
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O N T H E  
COMPOSITION of a SERMON.

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C H A P. VI.

Of Texts to be discussed by way of Observation.

SOME texts require a discussion by way of consideration, or *observation*. The following hints may serve for a general direction.

1. When texts are *clear* of themselves, and the matter well known to the *hearers*, it would be trifling to amuse the people with *explication*. Such texts must be taken as they are, that is, clear, plain, and evident, and only observations should be made on them. (1)

2. Most

(1) *Preachers must not attempt to explain clear subjects.* A very sensible writer calls this turn of mind "a capacity of being always frivolous, and always unanswerable. I have known it, adds he, more than once ascend the pulpit: one of this sort, tak-

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ing it in his head to be a great admirer of Dr. Tillotson and Dr. Beveridge, never failed of proving out of these great authors, things, which no man living would have denied him upon his own single authority." *Spectator*. vol. ii. n. 138.

A

I have



2. Most *historical* texts must be discussed in this way; for, in a way of explication, there would be very little to say. For example, what is there to *explain* in this passage? *Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus*

I have often wondered from what principle in some of our ministers this impertinence could arise, and the most plausible speculation seems to be this. It arises from *emulation* and *inattention*. Some great divine has properly stated, and proved certain articles in a regular body of divinity, where they could not be omitted, and at a time, when the truth of them was doubted. A modern divine makes this great man his model, and, not attending to times and circumstances, imitates him in every thing. We could easily exemplify this remark: but we choose rather to give an example of a dark explication of a clear passage to serve the base purpose of party-zeal.

“ John xxi. 18. *When thou shalt be old another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.* This promise of Jesus Christ to S. Peter belongs to the church, and particularly to the head, the pontiff of Rome. When Peter should be old, that is to say, in the advanced ages of the church, the popes shall be gird by another, and conducted whither they would

not. Who is the other, that shall gird and carry him whither he would not? It is the holy Spirit of God, who will conduct the popes by such hidden and secret ways, that in spite of their weakness and resistance, in spite of their worldly and wicked maxims, they shall be diverted from their proposed ends. We must distinguish between the Roman court and the Roman see. The same men, pope, cardinals, and clergy compose one body considerable in these two points of view: as a court, they are like other courts, and a wicked interested policy governs all they do: but as a see, they are governed by the infallible spirit of God, and constrained often to do that as spiritual persons, which as secular men they never intended to do. Hence it frequently happens, he comes pope out of the conclave, who was hardly a cardinal when he went in; and he comes out a cardinal, who entered the conclave pope in design; thus all the deliberations of the holy see are infallible oracles of truth.” Had this expositor ever read the words that follow his text;

rus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper, and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them, that sat at table with him: Job. xi. Would it not be a loss of time and labour to attempt to explain these words; and are they not clearer than any comments can make them? The way of observation, then, must be taken. (2)

### 3. There

text, this spake Jesus signify- glorify God? *Mem. des intrigues de la cour de Rom. p. 3.*

Omnia enim stolidi magis admirantur, amantque  
Inversis quæ sub verbis latitantia cernunt;  
Veraque constituunt quæ belle tangere possunt  
Aures, et lepido quæ sunt fucata sonore.

*Lucret. lib. 1.*

(2) *Historical passages must be discussed by way of observation.* I have seen no expositor, who affords more obvious, pertinent, and edifying observations, than our excellent Mr. Henry. Those parts of holy scripture, which seem at first sight the least instructive, furnish in the hand of this ingenious man much instruction, or, at least much opportunity of instruction. What in scripture seems less interesting to us than, that Ebedmelech the Ethiopian drew Jeremiah out of a dungeon with cords, old cast clouts, and rotten rags? Yet our expositor observes several useful articles in this history. "*Fact.* A prophet is in a dungeon. *Observation.* It is common for wicked people to look upon God's faithful ministers as their enemies.—*Fact.* The king could not

help him. *Obs.* Those will have a great deal to answer for, who, though they have a secret kindness for good people, dare not own it in a time of need.—*Fact.* Ebedmelech was an *Ethiopian*. *Obs.* Some *Gentiles* had more equity and piety than some Jews. — *Fact.* Ebedmelech was a *courtier*. *Obs.* God has a remnant in all places, among all sorts; there were saints even in *Cæsar's* household.—*Fact.* The king was sitting in the gate on publick business, when Ebedmelech applied to him for the release of Jeremiah. *Obs.* Whither should oppressed innocency flee for protection but to the throne? No time must be lost when life is in danger, especially a valuable life. God can raise up friends for his people in distress, where they little thought of them.—

3. There are some texts, which require *both* explication and observation, as when some parts may need explaining. (3) For example, Acts i. 10.

*And*

*Fact.* The king orders his release. *Obs.* The hearts of kings are in God's hands. Let this encourage us to appear boldly for God, we may succeed *better* than we could have thought.—*Fact.* Ebed-melech took old clouts and rags from under the *treasury* in the king's house. *Obs.* No *waste* should be made even in kings palaces: broken linen like broken meat should be *preserved* for the use of the poor.—*Fact.* Ebed-melech directed Jeremiah to put the soft rags under his *arm-holes*. *Obs.* Distressed people should be relieved with *tendernefs*.—*Fact.* Ebed-melech did not *throw* the rags down: but *let* them down by cords. *Obs.* The poor should be relieved with *respect*." Henry on Jer. xxxviii.

It is a false taste to imagine, that very abstruse passages, and very far-fetched elucidations of them adorn the pulpit.—The finest sermons, that we have, consist of plain observations of common things pressed home on the hearts of the hearers. They are most popular, and most useful.

(3) *In some texts explication and observation must be mixed.* Here follows an example from a Danish divine. The

subject is *the kingly office of Jesus Christ*. It is necessary to *explain* this subject, and to shew wherein the regal authority of Christ consists. "It consists, says our author, 1. in *vocation*; for the subjects of Christ are in rebellion, and he calls them to submission by his word, and by his spirit. 2. In *legislation*; for Christ gave laws to his apostles, and commanded them to *teach all nations to observe all things, whatsoever he had commanded them*. 3. In *present government*; for the dominion of Jesus extends over good and bad angels, the world and the church; the administration of providence, and the distribution of grace are under his actual direction. 4. In *future judgment*; for God hath given all judgment into his hand." So far explication. Our author closes the subject with *observations* on that obedience, which the subjects of Christ ought to yield to this king. "1. In all cases of conscience, where human authority, and the laws of Christ clash, Christians are to obey him rather than man. 2. Christians are firmly to believe, that Christ will guard, protect, and perpetuate his church, and they are to act on this principle



*And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold! two men stood by him in white apparel.*

principle amidst all the fraud and force of adverse times.

3. The subjects of Christ, if they would enter into the spirit of christian obedience, must constantly attend to these four precepts. 1. Seek not earthly honours: but *set your affections on things above.*

2. Contend for Christ not with carnal: but with spiritual weapons. 3. Associate with holy persons, take them for the subjects, and for the only true subjects of Jesus Christ. 4. Prepare for affliction, persecution, and death; *If we suffer with him we shall be glorified together.* Brochmand. *Theol. Systema.* Art. xvii. cap. ix. *Cas. Conscientiæ* 3. *Quæ debeant esse hominis christiani meditationes et curæ, ut Christum, ut Regem suum vere amet?* Tom. i. p. 1019.

The following example is of the mixed kind. "Prov. xvi. 32. *He that ruleth his spirit, is better than he, that taketh a city.* 1. Let us explain what it is to rule one's own spirit in regard to our natural dispositions, surrounding objects, and vicious but old habits. 2. Let us prove, that a man, who thus ruleth his own spirit, excels the greatest conqueror. In order to this, we need only make four observations. 1. On the motives, which animate our two heroes. 2. On the ex-

ploits, that they perform. 3. On the enemy, whom they attack. 4. On the rewards, which they obtain." Saurin. *Ser. Tom. ix. Sur le véritable heroïsme.*

Our divines pursue very different methods of disposing of the explanatory parts of those Sermons, which they compose of observations, and explication.

Sometimes the explanation makes the exordium. Thus Dr. Moss (on Luke xii. 21. *So is he, that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.*) explains the text in the introduction, and then adds "from the words thus explained, I find ground to raise these two observations, which shall be the subject of my following discourse. 1. A greedy desire of riches, and a fond reliance upon them, is the most wretched kind of folly and improvidence. 2. The best enjoyment, and wisest improvement of our worldly wealth, is to be rich towards God; that is, so to use and employ what we have as to recommend ourselves to his benediction and favour thereby." *Serm. before Governors of City Hospitals at St. Sepulchre's.* 1708.

Sometimes the explication makes one part of the body of the discourse. "Mat. v.



*apparel*. Here it will be necessary to *explain* in a few words the cause of their *looking stedfastly toward heaven*; for, by lifting their eyes after their divine master, they expressed the inward emotions of their minds. It will be needful also to *explain* this other expression, *as he went up*, and to *observe*, that it must be taken in its plain popular sense; and that it signifies not merely the removal of his visible presence, while he remained invisibly upon earth: but the absolute absence of his humanity. This is the natural sense of the words, and the observation is necessary to guard us against that sense, which the church of Rome imposes on them for the sake of transubstantiation. (4) You may  
also

16. *Let your light so shine before men*, and so on. 1. *Show* what is implied in the duty of letting our light shine before men. 2. Lay down some considerations proper to enforce the practice of it. 3. Observe how far these considerations may affect all Christians in general, or some in particular." *Dr. Waterland's Sermon, before the Sons of the Clergy at St. Paul's. Dec. 14. 1721.*

Some mix explication and observation all through the sermon, explaining each proposition and observing and enforcing the inferences, that arise from it. The discretion of the preacher must determine the disposing of these elucidations and observations.

(4) *Transubstantiation*. A learned foreigner very properly calls this "the most

monstrous doctrine that the frenzy of superstition was capable of inventing." It was established by Pope Innocent III. in the thirteenth century in the fourth council of Lateran, held in the year 1215. The Greek church adopted it in the seventeenth century. Our author gained the highest reputation by his controversy with the famous Nicole on this article. He proved by invincible arguments that the *doctrine* was not known till the ninth century, nor the *word* transubstantiation until the thirteenth. *Vid. Mosheim. Hist. Eccl. Cent. xiii. xvii.*

Many of the reformers, who rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, retained or invented wild, unintelligible notions,

also briefly explain this other expression, *behold! two men*, and shew, that they were angels in human shapes. Here you may discuss the question of angelical appearances under human forms. Notwithstanding these brief explications, this is a text, that must be discussed by way of observation.

Observe, in general, when explication and observation meet in one text, you must always explain the part, that needs explaining, *before* you make any observations; for observations must not be made, till you have established the sense plain and clear. (5)

#### 4. Some-

tions, or rather inexplicable expressions, concerning the Lord's supper. Luther taught that the real body and blood of Christ were received along with the bread and wine, and that the body of Christ was joined with the bread as in a red hot iron two distinct substances fire and iron are united; and this he called *consubstantiation*. The established church of England uses very doubtful language on this article. "The *body* of Christ is given, taken, and *eaten* in the supper, only after an heavenly and *spiritual* manner, and the mean, whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith." *Article* xxviii.

The explication of this article renders its meaning still more abstruse. "The *outward* part of the Lord's supper is bread and wine—the in-

*ward* part is the body and blood of Christ, which [body and blood] are *verily* and *indeed* taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper." *Catechism*.

The reformers thought themselves authorized to use language of this kind by the vi. of John: but this chapter has no more to do with the Lord's supper than it has with the creation of the world, as several of our latter divines have shewn. See *Dr. Harris's 2d Serm. on Transubst. at Salters-hall. 1735*. The first protestants had been so long accustomed to consider the Lord's supper as a mystery, that they were not offended at the unintelligibleness of their language and sentiments on this subject.

(5) *Before you make any observations explain and establish your meaning.* The violation  
of

4. Sometimes an *observation* may be made by way of *explication*, as when you would infer something important from the meaning of an original term in the text. For example; Acts xi. 1. *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.* It will be proper here to explain and enforce the Greek word *ομοθυμαδον*, which is translated *with one accord*, (6) for it

of this rule is common, and a preacher sometimes makes observations for an hour without condescending to inform the people what he is teaching. Suppose *faith* were the subject, it would not be enough to *observe*—1. *faith* is a gift of God—2. *faith* works by love—3. *faith* is a humbling grace—4. *faith* is a saving grace—and so on; for the preacher should first shew what *faith* itself is. This fault prevails very much in the applications of sermons. Many preachers close their sermons by addreses to saints—to sinners—and to seekers of God, or, as some love to express themselves, to sensible sinners; and, for want of explaining their meaning, their people go away without knowing to which class they belong. Assurances of salvation belong to saints—threatnings to sinners—and encouragements to seekers, as they are quaintly called: but it ministers great distress to timorous minds to be left in doubt concerning the class, to which they belong, and at the same time it che-

rishts pride and presumption in bold forward ignorant hearers, who never fail to arrogate to themselves the titles and privileges of the people of God. People will naturally enquire, *of whom speaketh the prophet?* and they deserve an answer.

The Roman rhetorician has well observed, that *three* things are essential to the carrying a point. What we affirm must be *understood*—*remembered*—and *believed*. “Si acciderit, ut Judex aut non intelligat—aut non meminerit—aut non credat, frustra in reliquis laborabimus.” *Quint. Inst. Lib. iv. cap. 2.*

(6) The Greek word *ομοθυμαδον* signifies *with one accord*. That is, it signifies so in this place, agreeably to the proper literal etymology of the word. This adverb is formed from the adjective *ομοθυμος*, and the adjective from *ομο* similis, and *θυμος* animus. *ομοθυμαδον* uno animo—una mente—concordi animorum voluntate—unanimiter. *Hederici Lex.*

But



it signifies, that they had the same hope, the same opinions, the same judgment; and thus their unanimity is distinguished from an exterior, and negative agreement, which consists in a mere profession of having no different sentiments, and in not falling out: but this may proceed from negligence, ignorance, or fear of a tyrannical authority. The uniformity, of which the church of Rome boasts, is of this kind; for if they have no disputes and quarrels among them on religious matters, (which, however, is not granted.) it is owing to the stupidity and ignorance, in which the people are kept, or to that indifference and negligence, which the greatest part of that community discover towards religion, concerning which they seldom trouble themselves; or to the fear of that tyrannical domination of their prelates, with which the constitution of their church arms them. Now, consider such an uniformity how you will, it will appear a false peace. If ignorance or negligence produce it, it resembles the quiet of dead carcases in a burying-ground, or the profound silence of night, when all are asleep; and, if it be owing to fear, it is the stillness of a galley-slave under the strokes of  
of

But this word is not always used precisely in this sense. Sometimes it only signifies *simul*. Thus Lam. ii. 8. *ομοθυμαδον* *νδερνεσε*, they [the rampart and the wall] *linguished together*. Job xxxiv. 15. *Τελευησεται* *πασα* *σαρξ* *ομοθυμαδον*, *all flesh shall perish together*. 1 Chron. x. 6. *ομοθυμαδον* *απεθανε*, *all Saul's house died together*. Our translators have certainly rendered it properly, in this

place, *with one accord*, *consentientibus votis, animis, et studiis*. The scope of the place, more than the etymology, determines the sense, that they have given it.

Some divines, from this, and other such passages, pretend to derive the impracticable doctrine of religious *uniformity*: a fine speculation! and that is all. See Vol. I. p. 232. n. 7.



of his officer, a mere shadow of acquiescence produced by timidity, and unworthy of the name of unanimity. (7) The disciples of Jesus Christ were not uniform in this sense: but their unanimity was inward, and positive, they *were of one heart, and one soul*. This explication, you perceive, is itself a very just observation, and there are very many passages of scripture, which may be treated of in the same manner. (8)

## 5. Obser-

(7) *Papish uniformity is unworthy of the name of unanimity.* There are two general methods of proving this proposition. The first is by narrating the *history* of popery; for of what does it consist but disputes, divisions, infinite intrigues and endless wars? The other is an exposure of the *principles* of popery, which notoriously destroy what they pretend to cherish.

Thus one of our divines. “ Rom. xi. 22. The *principles* of popery are schismatical. 1. The church of Rome requires the profession and practice of great *errors*, and dangerous corruptions. 2. This church hath made all these errors and corruptions *necessary terms of communion*. 3. These corruptions are imposed with a *most uncharitable rigor*. 4. These errors and corruptions are imposed on *persons*, who cannot profess and practise them without *damnable sin*. 5. The fundamental corruption of this church is a virtual *denying of*

*Christ Jesus the head, and a renouncing of allegiance to him, &c.* Moses Lowman’s *Serm. at Salters-hall. 1735. The principles of popery schismatical.*

(8) *The original terms of many passages of scripture afford just and pertinent observations.* The English translation of the holy scriptures is in general so just, and the consequences of finding fault with it so injurious to the common people, that every prudent minister will avoid needless observations of this kind. It is not fair to shake the people’s confidence in their bibles every Lord’s-day for no other reason than that of displaying our erudition. There are, however, many texts, which ought to be elucidated as our author directs. A few examples follow.

Acts xii. 4. Herod intended after *Easter* to bring Peter forth: *μετα το pascha* after the *passover*.

1 Cor. xi. 29. He, that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh *damnation*

5. Observations, for the most part, ought to be *theological*, that is to say, they should belong to a system of religion. Sometimes, indeed, we may make use of observations historical, philosophical, and critical: but these should be used sparingly, and

nation to himself: *κέρμα εαυτῷ*, judgment to himself; that is, he incurs some temporal punishment as sickness, &c. ver. 30. an observation ought also to be made here on the time; for although it pleased God to punish an abuse of the Lord's supper in the Corinthian church with sickness, or sudden death, yet the same sin is not punished in the same manner now.

1 Cor. ii. 1. I came not with excellency of *speech*, or of *wisdom*: *σοφία* signifies here the matter of St. Paul's preaching, and *λογος* the manner, see ver. 4. I did not

preach moral *philosophy*, nor did I deliver my doctrine in language formed by rhetorical rules.

Tit. iii. 14. Let ours also learn to maintain *good works*: to exercise *lawful business* *εργα*. *sæpe est opus illud, quod unum agimus in vita, vitæ actio* Sic Cicero de nat. deor. 1. "De figuris deorum, et de locis atque sedibus, et de actione vitæ multa dicuntur."

Gen. xlvii. 3. *Τὸ πρῶτον ἐργον*; - - - *ποιήμενος ἔσθλα των*. Jonah i. 8. *Τὸ σὺν ἐργασίᾳ*; - - - *Ἰδὲ καὶ κύριος με ἐργῶ*. Sic Sophoc. in Oedip. Tyran.

Οἱ ἔργον μεριμνῶν ποιοῖ, ἢ βίον τινα;

Θε. Παρμένας, &c.

Compare Eph. iv. 28. Phil. iv. 17. Vid. plura in *not. Dounæi in Op. Chrysost. tom. viii. p. 545. Edit. Savil.*

Tit. ii. 12. Live *soberly*, *righteously*, and *godly*: *σεμνός* *εργα* *se ipsam δικαίως* *juste erga proximum*, *σεβένος* *erga Deum*. Xenoph. Memorab. Soc. Def. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 13. Jude 12 *Ἀγαπᾶτε*, *love-feasts*. "These were suppers, not attended with the Lord's supper. Christians did not consider these of divine institution, and there-

fore dropped them, when the Emperor Trajan by Pliny in Bithynia forbade their meetings." Dr. Lardner. *test. beat. ii. 9. p. 40.*

From all these, and many more of the same kind, arise just and pertinent observations, which may be directed to popular edification: but it would be better wholly to omit them than to introduce them unguardedly, and so as to excite groundless suspicions concerning the whole English version.

and seldom, on necessary occasions, and when they cannot well be avoided; and even then they ought to be pertinent, and not common, that they may be heard with satisfaction. Make it a law to be generally very brief on observations of these kinds, and to inform your audience, that you only make them *en passant*. (9)

There

(9) *Historical, philosophical, and critical observations ought to be brief.* All observations of these kinds, intended to elucidate the *text*, are too short, which do not answer this end; and, when this end is answered, all enlargements are superfluous. This remark regards the *text* only; for in regard to the *discourse*, which is an elucidation of the sense, or general *meaning* of the text, it must be allowed, some of our finest sermons are grounded on philosophical, historical, and critical *data*. The following will exemplify my meaning.

“ Psal. lxxv. 5. *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness.*—There is a piety of *taste* and feeling opposed to a piety of examination and *reasoning*—piety of reasoning is *safe*: but that of taste is *pleasant*, and therefore preferable—there are certain *sympathies* and antipathies which almost defy explication, and yet are obvious and undeniable—observation of these will elucidate the *doctrine* of the text,

the piety of taste and feeling.

1. *Sensible objects affect us more than abstract invisible objects do.* A play affects us more than a sermon, not that we prefer a play before a sermon: but the one exhibits sensible objects, the other treats of invisibles, as of God, heaven, hell, &c. Piety of taste, then, includes freedom from the dominion of the senses.

2. *Imagination supplies the place of sense and reason.* An ideal good may be considered as real, if it be accompanied with an apparatus proper to strike the imagination. The features of a person do not prove, that a union with him would produce happiness, and yet the closest union is frequently formed on some such prejudice. Objects of piety are unaccompanied with imposing appearances, and, therefore, they affect us the less. Piety of taste guards against imagination, and appeals to reason.

3. *A present good, or a good, the enjoyment of which is near, affects us more than an absent good,*



There are, I allow, some cases, in which observations remote from theology are necessary to the elucidating of a text. When these happen, make your observations *professedly*, and explain and prove them. But, I repeat it again, in general, observations should be purely theological, either speculative, which regard the mysteries of Christianity, or practical, which regard morality; for the pulpit was erected to instruct the minds of men in religious subjects, and not to gratify curiosity, to inflame the heart, and not to find play for imagination. (1)

## 6. Obser-

*good, or than a good to be enjoyed at some distant period.* Sinful objects propose present enjoyment, religious objects propose future happiness, and therefore the first affect us most. Piety of taste anticipates futurity.

4. *A good, in possessing which we have found pleasure, produces in our hearts in its absence as vehement desires as a good, that is actually in present view.* Piety of taste, then, avoids worldly pleasures for the sake of becoming less sensible to worldly pleasures; and it increaseth the pleasures of devotion by frequently practising devotional exercises." *Saur. Ser. iv. Sur le gout pour dev.*

(1) *In some cases make historical and critical observations professedly.* There are several theological subjects, which cannot be discussed without such observations. Texts, which some say are *interpo-*

*lated*, must be vindicated thus. 1 John v. 7. What Mr. Martin, the best vindicator of the genuineness of this text, has said critically, and historically on the subject, Dr. Calamy has wrought into a sermon on the same passage. See *Martin's Essay on 1 John v. 7.* Dr. Calamy on the Trinity.

Texts, the understanding of which depends on *chronology* and *history*, must be discussed thus. The seventy weeks of Daniel, ix. 24. — The time of the birth of Christ, Gal. iv. 4. — The time of his crucifixion and resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. — The beginning and the end of the great apostasy, 2 Thess. ii. 1... 8. Rev. xiii. 18. xvii. 10, 11, 12. — The slaying of the witnesses, Rev. xi. 3, 7, 11. and many more of the same kind.

All these subjects are unpopular, and, in some sense, ne-



6. Observations should not be proposed in scholastic style, nor in common-place guise. (2) They should be seasoned with a sweet urbanity, accommodated to the capacities of the people, and adapted to the manners of good men. (3)

One

necessary to the general edification, for on the *truth* of the facts, and not on the *exact time* of their accomplishment, depends the people's faith.

(2) *Observations should not be proposed in common-place guise.* Many sermons of the last century are mere common-place collections, and those of the intriguing, time-serving part of the clergy are the very worst of this bad kind. They had not time to study their subjects, to form a style, and to compose a good sermon. Full of secular projects, fired with ambition and resentment, and obliged sometimes to preach and print, they were driven to the sad necessity of retailing the common-places of the wholesale dealers, whom they execrated. One example shall suffice. Seth, [Ward] lord bishop of Sarum preached the funeral sermon of the duke of Albermarle exactly in this way. "1 Cor. xv. 57. The gospel tells us, That God hath appointed a *day* wherein he will judge the world. That *Christ* is ordained of God, to to be judge both of quick and dead.

That he shall come *in the clouds* - - -

That he shall send his *angels* - - -

That he shall *sit* upon the throne of his glory.

That all nations shall be gathered - - -

Christ hath *assured* the world of the *truth* of this *theory*.

Not by giving the world a *set* and *series* of *imaginary principles* of vain philosophy -

Not by *bare assertions* and *confident repetitions* - - -

Not by *phantastical obscure ratiocinations* concerning *numbers, vehicles.*"

In this naked manner, as boys string birds eggs, did this glorious divine connect the parts of his sermon, till, toward the close, he preached himself into what he calls *locum lubricum*, where we shall at present leave him to get out as he can.

(3) *Observations should be seasoned with a sweet urbanity.*

Urbanity is opposed to rusticity, and that, of which our author speaks, regards both the *subject* itself, and the *language*, in which it is expressed. The Roman rhetorician includes gesture, &c. In *qua nihil absonum, nihil agreste, nihil*

One of the best expedients for this purpose is a reduction of obscure matters to a natural, popular, modern air. You can never attain this ability, unless you acquire a habit of conceiving clearly of subjects yourself, (4) and of expressing them in a free, familiar, easy manner, remote from every thing forced, and far-fetched. (5) All long trains of

nihil inconditum, nihil peregrinum, neque *sensu*, neque *verbis*, neque *cre, gestu*ve possit deprehendi. *Quint. Inst. Lib. iv.*

Urbanity is not one single qualification, it is the union of all. There are vulgar notions, vulgar expressions, vulgar gestures, vulgar pronunciations: and there are on the contrary finical airs, and fine-spun theories, which are all opposite to urbanity. This discourse is too learned, that is too common—this style is too stiff, that is too flimsy—this air is too haughty, and that is too free—this sermon is too orderly, and that is too negligent—In short, if urbanity be not in the preacher, it will never be in his sermons, and nothing can give it him but a familiar converse with the politer part of mankind. Well-bred women are the best tutors of this science: but it might be dangerous to the morals of some young men to be put under their tuition. A refined way of thinking, a delicacy of expression, innumerable graces of elocution and action, belong to

some of the fair sex; and, without sinking from manly dignity into squeaking effeminacy, a grave wise man may receive many a law from their lips. *Strength and honour are their clothing—they open their mouths with wisdom, and the law of kindness is in their tongues.* Prov. xxxi. 25, 26.

(4) *Acquire a habit of conceiving clearly of subjects.* “1. Conceive of things clearly and distinctly in their own natures. 2. Conceive of things completely in all their parts. 3. Conceive of things comprehensively in all their properties and relations. 4. Conceive of things extensively in all their kinds. Conceive of things orderly, or in a proper method.”

*Dr. Watts's Logick, Chap. vi.*

(5) *Express your thoughts in a free manner.* A minister of Jesus Christ should think freely. Dr. Bentley somewhere execrates those, who brought free-thinking into disrepute by their abuse of the term. A sober free-thinker, un-compelled by human authority, and unrestrained

of arguments, all embarrassments of divisions and subdivisions, all metaphysical investigations, which  
are

restrained by human formularies, is the most likely of any man to attain that generous liberal expansibility of sentiment, which the redeemer of the souls of mankind every where inculcates. A minister of Christ should *speake* freely. His language should be frank, open, ingenuous, free from duplicity and suspicion of collusion. St. Paul seems to include both in 2 Cor. iv. 12. Πολλὴν παρρησίαν χρῶμεθα, multa libertate utimur, sc. in evangelio prædicando. *Vid. etiam* 2 Cor. v. 2.

*Express yourself in a FAMILIAR manner.* There is a soft, domestick style, such as a wise parent uses to his family: but this is nothing like the silly cant of an old nurse. Dear souls—precious souls—dearly beloved—and an hundred more such phrases, however proper in certain connections, have been hackneyed out of their senses in christian pulpits. Ministers, who aim at this excellence, should remember, there is such a thing as being too familiar.

*Express yourself in an EASY manner.* Here also are two extremes. The formal stiffness of a pedant, and the carelessness of a man, who does not respect his company, are both at a distance

from Mr. Claude's ease. The ease of the *manner* of a christian preacher in the pulpit is not the ease of a man *alone*, who may loll—and hem—and hawk—and cough—and spit—and blow his nose—but it is the ease of a well-bred man in *company*. The ease of the *matter*, of which a christian sermon is composed, is a relative idea, and must take its meaning from the persons addressed; for that subject may be very easy to some, which is extremely difficult to others. Nothing makes speaking on a subject so easy to the speaker as a thorough understanding of it. With what perfect ease to themselves, and with what unembarrassed facility to others do people in all publick places of traffick communicate their ideas! The reason is, they understand what they talk about.

*Express your thoughts in an UNFORCED manner.* A subject is forced, when it is made to speak the direct contrary of the text, from which it is pretended to be drawn; or when a direction is any way given it *contrary* to its genuine meaning. Here follows an example of each. Heb. v. 4. [as] *No man taketh this honour [of high priesthood] to himself; but he that is called of God, as was Aaron:*



are mostly impertinent, and, like the fields, the cities,

*So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High-priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* St. Paul means to inform the Hebrews—that the *christian æconomy* was of divine institution, as well as that of Moses—that *Jesus Christ* had as clear evidence of his appointment to *abolish* the Aaronical priesthood as Aaron had to set it up—the general meaning, therefore, of this text may be contained in this proposition, *Jesus Christ's high-priesthood* had the honour of a divine institution; yet this very text comes from an university press forced into a proof of the divine institution of - - - *English Episcopacy.* *Defence of Episcopacy, Serm. at Oxford, 1708. By Tho. Bisse.*

*Isai. liii. 7. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* This text is a volunteer in the service of *Jesus Christ*: but a zealous divine pressed it into the army of his master, forced it into the service of *Charles I.* and made it blaspheme through twenty-five quarto pages.

*Dr. Langford's Serm. before the House of Commons, Jan. 30, 1697.*

“ *Tit. ii. 15. Let no man despise thee.* It is in fact as notorious, as it is unjust and

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unreasonable, that no sort of ministers are generally more despised by the laity of their own communion, than we of the *established church of England.* A *Papist* almost as much adores the sacrificer, as he doth the sacrifice of the mass - - - *dissenters* generally pay a very great deference to their ministers - - - but how common is it for men, that call themselves sons of *our church*, to scoff at her priests - - - I shall consider these words, 1. As a caution to the *laity* not to despise *the clergy* [that is, the *episcopal clergy.*] 2. As a caution to *the clergy* to give no occasion to despise them.” Thus begins a good sermon on the above words. We think the division natural and the inferences just: but the text is forced, while it is confined to the *episcopal clergy*, for it is equally applicable to all ministers of other communities. *Henry Newcome's Serm. preached at a visitation at Manchester 1712. Serious admonition to all despisers of THE CLERGY.*

*Express your meaning in a way remote from every thing FAR-FETCHED.* A subject is *far-fetched*, when, although it may have some connection with the text, yet this connection lies at a great distance and obliges the preacher to go a long, long way to come

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at



cities, and the houses, which we imagine in the clouds,

at it. Here follow two or three examples. A preacher in the latter end of the reign of Charles II. proposed to treat of *patience and submission to AUTHORITY*, and endeavoured, in a sermon of fifty-eight quarto pages, to preach the Lord Mayor of London, and the Court of Aldermen into the doctrines of passive-obedience and non-resistance; and to this purpose, took for his text Heb. x. 36. *Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done THE WILL OF GOD ye might receive the promise.* From patient submission to the will of God to passive obedience to the will of king Charles is a long way! What a herculean labour to fetch the text about! *Dr. Moore at Guildhall Chapel 1684.*

Bp. Beveridge had the courage to set out at 1 Cor. xiv. 26. *Let all things be done to edifying*, and, in one single octavo sermon of twenty-four pages, the dexterity to arrive at the excellency and usefulness of the common-prayer-book used in the established church of England. What rapid reasoning! "The text is an apostolical canon—the common prayer is exactly conformable to it—I, [Dr. Beveridge, Rector of St. Peter's Cornhill.] ascribe the compilation of it to the same extraordinary assistance from God, which afterwards

enabled the compilers to suffer martyrdom—The devil hath had a spite against the book ever since it was first made because it is destructive of his kingdom—he hath employed the utmost of his power and policy to blast its reputation—the papists threw it out once in Q. Mary's days, and the fanatics outed it again in the days of king Charles—but the most high God was pleased in a miraculous manner to restore it—" and so all things are done to edifying. What a knack have some men at reasoning! And did bishop Beveridge really think, St. Paul would have taken this inspired book in one hand, and the sword of the civil magistrate in the other, and have done all the edifying feats in the church at Corinth, which his pretended successors have performed elsewhere! Edifying articles—edifying creeds—edifying oaths—edifying gestures—edifying habits—edifying ceremonies—edifying spiritual courts—edifying jails—edifying fines—edifying banishments—edifying executions—Let ALL things, which relate to the English episcopal liturgy, be done to edifying. St. Paul says so.

Jer. vi. 16. *Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk*

clouds, the mere creatures of fancy, all these should be avoided. (6)

7. Care, however, must be taken to avoid the opposite extreme, which consists in making only poor, dry, spiritless observations, frequently said under pretence of avoiding school-divinity, and of speaking only popular things. Endeavour to think clearly, and try also to think nobly. Let your observations be replete with beauty as well as propriety, the fruits of a fine fancy under the direction of a sober judgment. If you be inattentive to this article, you will pass for a contemptible declaimer of mean and shallow capacity, exhausting

*walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls - - - "Old paths, i. e. the venerable simplicity of the church of England, as it stood from the first days of queen Elizabeth till about the death of Charles the martyr—the good way, i. e. that divine doctrine of Christianity non-resistance—walk therein, i. e. avoid a set of odd, singular, separating notions, rely on the opinions of all the wise and good men in the world, and don't trust your own shallow, empty, bloated reason."* Well might the Oxonian, who preached thus from the above text, conclude his sermon in these words: *All-seeing spirit! thou knowest we have a name that we live, and yet are dead, for our works are not found perfect before God. Wm. Tilly's Sermon before the University of*

*Oxford 1710. Return to good old principles.*

I do not know whether this last example be more forced or far-fetched; for neither the souls, nor the bodies of our ancestors found rest in these old paths, and certainly *Jeremiah* never sought after them.

(6) *Avoid imaginary observations.* A very accurate writer observes—"that our opinion and belief are often influenced by *passion*—by *propensity*—and by *affection*. The noted story of a fine lady and a curate viewing the moon through a telescope is a pleasant illustration of the latter. I perceive, says the lady, two shadows inclining to each other, they are certainly two happy lovers: not at all, replies the curate, they are two steeples of a cathedral." *Elem. of Criticism, vol. i. chap. 2. p. 5.*

hausting yourself and not edifying your hearers; a very ridiculous character! (7)

To open more particularly some sources of observations, remark every thing, that may help you to think, and facilitate invention. You may rise from species to genus, or descend from genus to species. You may remark the different characters of a virtue commanded, or of a vice prohibited. You may enquire whether the subject in question be relative to any other, or whether it do not suppose something not expressed. You may reflect on the person speaking or acting, or on the condition of the person speaking or acting. You may observe time, place, persons addressed, and see whether there be any useful considerations arising from either. You may consider the principles of a word or action, or the good or bad consequences, that follow. You may attend to the end proposed in a speech or action, and see if there be any thing remarkable in the manner of speaking or acting. You may compare words or actions with

(7) *Some declaimers make themselves ridiculous by their observations. Thus one, "Judges xiii. 22. Manoah said unto his wife, We shall die: but his wife said, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have shewed us all these things." Obs. 1. The gray mare is sometimes the best horse."*

"Prov. vi. 9. *Go to the ant thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise.* Obs. 1. So rational doth this little creature appear, that, were I not a christian, I should in some measure believe transmigration. Obs. 2. Had it pleased

the Almighty to have put in these creatures an immortal soul, how righteously might they have gone to heaven, and we have been shut out. Obs. 3. What a great baby a worldling is, he is God's fool, the devil's packhorse, and a drudge for hell." *Humfrey's christian's great concern, Sermon. 2.*

Multitudes of examples lie at hand; but it would be misery to transcribe such nonsense. It is not every man's part to think nobly; but surely all preachers should think justly.



with others similar, and remark the differences of words and actions on different occasions. You may oppose words and actions to contrary words and actions, either by contrasting speakers or hearers. You may examine the foundations and causes of words or actions, in order to develop the truth or falsehood, equity or iniquity of them. You may sometimes make suppositions, refute objections, and distinguish characters of grandeur, majesty, meanness, infirmity, necessity, utility, evidence, and so on. You may advert to degrees of more or less, and to different interests. You may distinguish, define, divide, and, in a word, by turning your text on every side, you may obtain various methods of elucidating it. I will give you examples of all. (8)

## I. RISE

(8) *Sources of observations.* Dr. Watts says, "Topicks, and common-places inform persons of lower genius, and refresh the memories of others of superior parts: but, adds he, a man of moderate genius, who has made himself master of his theme, has seldom need to run knocking at the doors of all the topicks, that he may furnish himself with argument, or matter of speaking: and, indeed, it is only a man of sense and judgment, that can use common-places and topicks well; for, amongst the variety, he only knows what is fit to be left out, as well as what is fit to be spoken." *Logic.*

"Taste, says Mr. Rollin from the ancient orators, serves in composition to

guide and direct the understanding. It makes use of the imagination without submitting to it, and keeps it always in subjection. It consults nature universally, follows it step by step, and is a faithful image of it. Reserved and sparing in the midst of abundance and riches, it dispenses the beauties and graces of discourse with temper and wisdom. It never suffers itself to be dazzled with the false, how glittering a figure soever it may make. It is equally offended with too much and too little, it knows precisely where to stop, and cuts off without regret or mercy whatever exceeds the beautiful and perfect." *Belles Lettres, vol. i.*



## I.

## RISE FROM SPECIES TO GENUS.

Pfal. l. 14. *Sacrifice to God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High.* In discussing this text, I would observe first the terms, *sacrifice thanksgiving*, and would elucidate them by going from the species to the genus. The dignity of sacrifice *in general* would lead me to observe—that it is the immediate commerce of a creature with his God, an action, in which it is difficult to judge whether earth ascend to heaven, or heaven descend to earth—that in almost all the other acts of religion the creature receives of his creator: but in this the creator receives of his creature—that the Lord of the universe, who needs nothing, and who eternally lives in a rich abundance, hath such a condescension as to be willing to receive offerings at our hands—that, of all dignities, that of the priesthood was the highest, for which reason the ancient priests dwelt in the tabernacle, or temple of God—that, when God divided Canaan among the children of Israel, each tribe had its portion except that of Levi, to which God assigned nothing. Why? because he loved them less? No, but because he gave them the priesthood, and because he, who had the priesthood, the altar, and the censer, had God for his portion, and consequently could have no need of temporal things. This is, you see, to rise from species to genus; for the text does not speak of sacrifice *in general*: but of the sacrifice of *praise* in particular; yet, when these

these general considerations are pertinent, they cannot fail of being well received. (9)

## II. DESCEND

(9) *Go from species to genus.* That is to say, If a text mention a *general* idea, and confine it to some *particular* subject, do not raise your observations on the particular subject, at least do not restrain them to that: but take the general idea, and make that the ground of your discourse. For example.

Acts xxviii. 5, 6. *He shook off the beast, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked, when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly; but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a God.* This text speaks of an unjust censure, and a foolish applause, which the barbarians of *Melita* made of *St. Paul*; but by the above rule a good preacher took the general ideas, and shewed, “1. The unreasonableness and danger of judging *others*, particularly such persons as are not at all, or very little known to us, upon account of any calamity, or any other appearance whatsoever. 2. How a *wise* and *good man* ought to behave himself, if he should happen to suffer under any such judgment.” *Dr. Adams’ Sermon, at Windsor before the Queen, 1705.*

*Psal. cxxii. 6. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall*

*prosper, that love thee.* The preacher does not confine himself to the particular idea of *Jerusalem*; but takes the general notion *national peace*, and shews, 1. The *duty*--pray for it—2. The *motives*--prosperity of several kinds attends it. The first leads him to treat of all the calamities of war, and the blessings of peace—and the last expands into many just and beautiful concomitants of prosperity. *Ayerst’s Sermon, before the Plenipotentiaries at Utrecht, 1712.*

John vii. 27. *We know this man, whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.* The Evangelist here records the pretended doubts of *some of the Jews of Jerusalem*, verse 25, concerning the claim of *Jesus of Nazareth* of the Messiahship. An excellent preacher takes this text, and treats of *infidelity in general*. The text says nothing of disbelieving the being of a God, or the mission of *Moses*: but the preacher goes from the particular ideas of the *text* to the general subject, and observes 1. That a depraved heart offers objections against religion without venturing to believe them—2. That ignorance adopts them without understanding them—3. That the whole system of infidelity is a vain bravado devoid of every

## II.

## DESCEND FROM GENUS TO SPECIES:

An example may be taken from Psal. cxxiii. 3.  
*Behold! as the eyes of servants look unto the hand  
 of their masters, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our  
 God.* (1) Here, you may aptly observe in masters  
 in

every degree of consolation. These three observations are the parts of the discourse. *Massillon Serm. Carême. tom. iv.*

Ezek. xxxvi. 32. *Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel.* The prophet speaks of the unmerited mercy of God to Israel: but Bp. Beveridge very properly goes from the particular application in the text to the general idea, and "Observes 1. Though God never punishes a nation but when it deserves it at his hands, yet he often blesses a nation, when it does not deserve it. Obs. 2. A sense of these undeserved favours should work upon men's hearts, and stir them up the rather to repentance." *Thanksgiv. Serm. at St. Paul's bef. Queen Ann for Vict. at Audenard, 1708.*

Quintilian calls common-places *sedes argumentorum*, in quibus latent, et ex quibus sunt petenda. Examples from Cicero. *Genus. Virtu-*

*tes imperatoris in genere. Pro lege Manil. Laudat studia humanitatis. Pro Arch. De gravitate parricidii. Pro Rosc. De Græcis testibus. Pro Flac. De stoicis. Pro Mur. Vid. Quint. Inst. Lib. v. cap. 10. Edit. Roll.*

(1) *The eyes of servants unto the hand of their masters.* The eyes of servants look, or are directed to the hand of their masters; so must the ellipsis be supplied. The phrase is said to signify four ideas. Servants expect from their masters orders, or instructions, as well as favours, protection, and correction, *ad manum*, id est, ad gestus, nutus, et significationes, ut eis promptissime ministrent. Hinc *Plaut. in Aulul. Edico tibi ut hujus oculos in oculis habeas tuis. Et Ter. Adelph. Act. ii. sc. 1. Caveto nunc jam oculos a meis oculis unquam dimoveas tuos.*

*Our eyes wait until the Lord have mercy on us.* This is the language of a servant under just correction for his faults, and penitently waiting for forgiveness. See *Isai.*  
 ix.



in regard to servants, and in God in regard to us, three senses of the phrase. There is a hand of *beneficence*, a hand of *protection*, or deliverance; and a hand of *correction*. A servant expects favours from the hand of his master, not from that of a stranger. He looks to him for protection and deliverance in threatening dangers, and refuses all help, except that of his master. He expects correction from him, when he commits a fault, and, when corrected, humbles himself under his master's frown, in order to disarm him by tears of repentance. The application of these to the servants of God is easy. The word *succour* (2) is general, and may very well be considered by descending from the genus to the species, and by observing the different occasions, which we have for divine assistance, and consequently the different assistances and succours, which God affords us—as the help of his *word* to remove our ignorance, doubts, or errors—the help of his *providence* to deliver us out of afflictions—the help of his *grace* and spirit to guard us from the temptations of the world, and to aid us against the weaknesses of nature—the help of divine *consolations* to sweeten the bitterness of our exercises under distressing circumstances, and to give us courage to bear afflictions—the help of his *mercy* to pardon our sins, and to restore to our consciences that tranquillity, which they have lost by offending God. You will meet with a great number of texts which may be discussed in this manner: but great care must be taken not to strain the subject,

for

ix. 13. *Hammond apud Pol.*  
*Synops. in loc.*

(2) *Until he have mercy*  
*upon us, or, until he succour*

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us. *Donec misereatur nostri*  
—*Donec benefaciat nobis*—  
i. e. liberaverit a presenti  
miseria.

D



for that would make you look like a school-boy. The best way is to make only one general observation, and then to apply it to several particular subjects, collecting all at last into one general point of view. (3)

### III. RE-

(3) *Go from genus to species*, that is to say, when a text speaks of a subject in general, apply the general idea to particular cases. Thus a general truth may be applied to particular persons—times—places—circumstances—and so on, as in the example given by Mr. Claude, to illustrate which the more, we subjoin the following.

Psal. cxliv. 15. *Happy is that people, that is in such a case* [as the psalmist had been describing.] *Yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.* These general truths, applicable to *any nation*, are applied by Bp. Burnet, in the most beautiful manner, to the *English* nation under the auspices of William III. and they amount to this — happy is Great Britain in being secured from *breaking in*, that is, from *foreign invasion*—Happy is Britain in the security of *liberty and property*, a second sense of security from *breaking in*, ver. 14.—Happy the *English*, who are secured from *going out*, that is, who are not *banished*, or *barrasted* into voluntary exile—Happy the *English*, who have *no complaining in their streets*, no perversion of publick justice,

no invasions of the rights of conscience—Happy the *English, whose God is the Lord*, who have the Christian religion in reformed purity, &c. &c. *Thanksgiv. Sermon. bef. House of Commons for the Revolution.* 1688.

Gal. vi. 2. *Bear ye one anothers burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.* This general exhortation is justly and beautifully applied by Dr. Snape to the relief of the *City-hospitals*. Bear ye [*rich citizens of London.*] the *innocent burdens*, that affect the *condition*, the *bodies*, or the *minds* of your fellow-creatures in these hospitals. Relieve poor children from the burden of *ignorance* by subscribing to *Christ's hospital*—Relieve profligate people from the *guilty burden of vice* by contributing to *Bridewell*, and the *London-workhouse*—Relieve the sick poor by contributing to the *hospitals of S. Bartholomew*, and *S. Thomas*—Relieve the mad and distracted by subscribing to *Bethlehem*. *Spittal Sermon at S. Bride's.* 1707.

Mat. iv. 1. *Then was Jesus led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.* The text speaks of temptations in *general*:

ral: but a sermon preached to the clergy of the diocese of Clermont runs only on temptations to *ambition* in particular, to which *clergymen* are exposed. "The first snare is only a scheme to *live genteelly*, command the stones to be made bread, this danger belongs to the first entrance on the ministry. The second is presumptuously to aspire after *preferments*, he set him on the *pinacle of the temple*; and excites a vain hope, that God will be glorified by rash enterprises, he shall give his angels charge. This belongs to an aspiring minister. The third is a boundless desire of *riches* and honours in elevated stations, by which a man is induced to submit to abject services for the sake of elevation, all these will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Massillon *Confession*. 1. *sur l'ambition des clercs*.

John ii. 24. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man. The text gives this reason why Jesus did not confide in them, because he knew what was in man. He did not consider them as dangerous confidants on account of one sin only, he viewed the whole body of sin in them, he saw *τι ἦν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ*. There is (by the way) an elegant antanaclasis in the passage. Many at the passover *ἐπισυνέσαν* in his name, but

Jesus did not *ἐπισυνέειν* εαυτὸν αὐτοῖς. The like figure is in John i. 10. he was *ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ*, and *ο κόσμος* was made by him, and *ο κόσμος* knew him not. So again John iv. 13. 14. *Πᾶς ὁ πίπων ἐκ τῆς ὑδαλῆς τῆς διψήσεως παλιν. ὅς δ' ἂν πίη ἐκ τῆς ὑδαλῆς ἔργῳ δάσῃ καὶ μὴ διψήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.*—To return, the text considers the ignorance, inconstancy, malevolence, &c. of the Jews, and assigns the notice, that Christ took of the *whole*, as a reason why he did not trust himself to them: but Bp. Massillon composes from this text a sermon on *slander* and begins thus. "They were the same Pharisees, who had decried the conduct of Jesus Christ to the people, and envenomed the innocence and holiness of his words, who made a feint of believing in him, and arranged themselves among his disciples; and such, my brethren, is the character of a detractor, who hides under an outside of friendly politeness, the wormwood and gall of slander."—He observes, nothing can be more frivolous than the pretexts used to justify slander—it cannot be justified by the *imprudence of the culprit*—nor by the *notoriety of the crime*—nor by *zeal for the glory of God*. The discussion of these three reflections make the *whole* of that beautiful discourse. *Ser. Car. 4. sur la médifance.*

Examples from Cicero. *Laudatur Pompeii temperantia a præcipuis temperantiæ speciebus, per negationem. Pro leg. Manil. Pisonis scelera exaggerantur per species crudelitatis, avaritiæ, perfidiæ, impietatis. In Pis.*

The following remarks seem well grounded. Genus ad probandam speciem minimum valet, plurimum ad refellendam. Contra, species firmam probationem habet generis, infirmam refutationem. *Quint. Inst. lib. v. 10.*

Before a preacher descends to particular ideas, he should take care to prove the general idea is in his text, otherwise he will build on the sand.

*Episcopal, and Archidiaconal visitations* have been grounded on the following texts. 1 Sam. vii. 15. *Samuel went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and JUDGED Israel in all these places.*—2 Chron. xvii. 7, 8, 9. *Jehoshaphat sent princes TO TEACH in the cities of Judah, and with them he sent Levites and priests, and they went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and*

*TAUGHT the people.*—Luke viii. 1. *Jesus went about all Galilee, TEACHING and PREACHING the gospel.* Acts xv. 35. *Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again, and visit our brethren in every city, where we have preached the word of the Lord, and SEE HOW THEY DO.* The application of these to English episcopal visitations is not pertinent, because the general idea, that is *visitation*, in the *episcopal* sense of the word, is not in the texts. *Bp. of Lincoln's Charge in prim. Visitation 1706.*

Gal. iv. 18. *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.* The object of Christian zeal is a good man, or a good thing, and, when a furious zealot, applied these words to the canons, the articles, the homilies, and the liturgy of the established church of England; and, when he affirmed, zeal for them is incompatible with toleration of dissenters, he certainly found that in the nut, which had never been in the shell. *Smeaton's Vistat. Serm. at Andover. 1704.*



## III.

REMARK THE DIVERS CHARACTERS OF A VICE,  
WHICH IS FORBIDDEN, OR OF A VIRTUE, WHICH  
IS COMMANDED. (4)

For example, 2 Theff. iii. 5. *The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God,* (5) *and into the patient waiting for Christ.* (6) Here I should describe the characters of true love to God, and, perhaps, it might not be improper to subjoin the characters of expectation of Christ; and, that I might not seem to travel the same road twice, I would call the

(4) *Remark the characters of a vice, or a virtue.* Observe what properties, or peculiar qualities belong to any particular subject. This is a kind of diffusive definition, including *propria* and *differentia*. We have a fine example of this manner of treating the subject of philanthropy in 1 Cor. xiii. In like manner S. James describes the characteristical properties of *the wisdom, that is from above*, iii. 17. "I shall explain, says an excellent man, each of these seven characters of wisdom, and shew, that they are the characters of true and heavenly wisdom, and then apply what shall be said on this argument to ourselves." *Dr. Bradford's Sermon on purity and peace at Bow-Church.* 1710.

"Acts iv. 32. *The multitude of them, that believed, were of one heart, and of one*

*soul, &c. . . .* Obs. 1. The two great characters of the whole body of Christians at that time, unanimity and charity. Obs. 2. In what manner and degree Christians in every age ought to resemble them in these characters, &c. &c." *Dr. Bradford's Sermon at St. Sepulchre's for Charity-Schools. Unan. and Char. the Character of Christians.* 1709.

(5) *The Lord, that is, Christ, by his spirit—direct, moveatque magis et magis—your hearts into the love of God, vel 1. passivam, quæ a Deo est: vel 2. activam, quod perinde est, quum altera alteri semper annexa sit, nempe in adultis; quæ est erga Deum, ut Deum diligatis. Poli Synopsis. in loc.*

(6) *In dilectionem Dei. i. e. ut Deum diligatis. Genetivus hic objectum significat.*



the latter, emotions, which accompany hope in Christ. (7)

To begin with the *characters* of true love to God,  
1. The

*In patientiam Christi.* i. e. fui, nomen repetit loco pronominis, per hebraismum nempe in eam patientiam, cujus causa est Christus; vel propter Christum, ut sit elipsis τῆς ἐνείας. Grot.

*Patience of Christ.* ὑπομονὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ.—Rev. i. 9 καὶ ὑπομονὴν ἰδοὺ Χριστοῦ.

(7) *Emotions, which accompany hope*, that is to say, the *concomitants* of hope. Concomitants are not causative, or consequential: but collateral; they are conjoined with another thing. These, in the composition of a sermon, resemble accompaniments in musick, and our divines throw them into their compositions in a great variety of methods. Sometimes they treat of concomitants *professedly*, as Mr. Claude does above; more frequently, especially among our old divines, concomitants compose the *application*; of this latter method two examples shall suffice.

“ Acts vii. 22. *Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.*” After discussing the subject, human literature, and shewing the great advantages of it in the exercise of the ministry, the preacher makes an *application* of his subject by shewing

what ought to accompany human learning in the ministers of religion. “ 1. Use it not *unnecessarily*. 2. Use it not *vain-gloriously*. 3. Use it not *proudly*. 4. Use it not *heretically*. 5. Use it not *profanely*.—But use it with *humility—moderation—sobriety*—as an handmaid to Christ, &c. *Funeral Sermon for Langley, Master of St. Paul’s School, by Dr. Reynolds.* 1657.

“ *Joshua i. 2. Moses my servant is dead.* . . . The servant of Christ, whose funeral we are now solemnizing, like Moses, was *faithful* in executing all the parts of his office; and his *fidelity* was accompanied with. . . 1. *Disinterestedness*—2. *Plainness* and *openness of heart*—3. *Courage*—4. *Candour*—5. *Concise good sense*—6. *Diligence*, &c. &c. *Sam. Jacombe’s Sermon at Bright’s funeral.* 1656.

In modern practice concomitants are usually interwoven with the subject, and serve to explain, illustrate, and prove it, conveying innumerable graces into a discourse, and freeing it from the stiffness of scholastick pedantry. Various methods, however, are proper on various occasions, and preachers must use their own skill in selecting.

1. The seat of it is the *heart*, which it penetrates, and possesses. This distinguishes it from the feigned love of hypocrites, which is only in word, or in external actions, while their hearts are full of sinful self-love, so that it may be said of them as God once said of the Israelites, *this people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.*

2. It is a love, that possesses the *whole* heart, without allowing a partition among different objects. Thus it is distinguished from that partial love, which almost-christians have, who have sometimes good desires toward zeal and repentance: but they are transient only, and never come to perfection, because the soul is divided, and occupied with various worldly objects, and because the love of God, from which true repentance and zeal proceed, is not rooted in the heart: it is for this reason, that scripture commands us to love God with *all* our hearts, or, as David speaks, *to love him with a cordial affection.* (8)

### 3. The

(8.) *David says, we must love God cordially.* I shall suppose, Mr. Claude alludes to Psal. xviii. 2d. in the Heb. the 1st verse.—*I will love thee, O Lord.* אהבתיך *ex intimis visceribus diligam te.* אהבתי *dilexit, proprie ex intimis visceribus quasi deductum a nomine אהבתי uterus, qui tenerrimo affectu fœtum complectitur.* Buxtorf.

The verb, as one observes, is in Kal. and signifies *to be affected, move or yearn* as the *bowels* do in tender affection, as in love or pity. *To love intimately, tenderly, intensely.*

Psal. ciii. 13.—The Greek verb σπλαγχνίζομαι, from σπλάγχνον, a *bowel*, is often used in the same sense by the writers of the New Testament.—Luke i. 78. *per viscera misericordiæ.* Phil. ii. 1. *si qua viscera.* Metonym. subjecti. Col. iii. 12. *viscera misericordiæ.* Metonym. i John iii. 17. *Clauserit viscera sua.*—Parkhurst.

Our Lexicographers do well to trace words to their original roots: but we should do very ill, were we to use the original root-word always to express the meaning

3. The love of God is not indeed alone in the heart of a good man, he may also love creatures; a father loves his children, a friend his friend, a master his servant, a king his subjects, a wife her husband;

of a writer more fully. Most words expressive of the operations of *spirit* were originally taken from the *material* instrument, by which these invisible operations expressed themselves. Hand for *power*—heart for *sensibility*—bowels for *love*—and a thousand more might be mentioned, and a natural account might be given of them. But, waiving an exact discussion of this subject, it may not be improper to observe, that a divine should avoid indelicacy of style, and *seek to find out acceptable words*. Eccl. xii. 10. I say nothing of some indelicate translations of whole passages of scripture, such as 1 Kings xxi. 21. Ezek. xvi. 4. 6. 25. Matt. ix. 20. 1 John iii. 9. v. 18. but I may venture to say, that many single words, and even many *phrases*, not improper in our present translation, become very improper in sermons by an injudicious and promiscuous use of them. Were a student to make an index expurgatorius, probably he might see reason to expunge several of these, and also many popular phrases and terms of our old divines. For example,

flesh—lust—lusts of the flesh—corruptions of the heart—bowels of mercy—a dear redeemer—fighting for God—purging from sin—a naked sinner—things of God—breasts of ordinances—womb of conversion—rottenness of heart—putrifying sores, &c. &c. I will not say what one said of men abounding with these phrases, *they are a great nothing in a juggling-box*: but I must say, their sermons are disagreeable somethings, which produce bad effects. A young clergyman of my acquaintance, hearing a minister preaching on the types, and expounding *the fat, that covereth the inwards, and the two kidneys, and the fat, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver*, Lev. iii. 3, 4. became so heart-sick, that, had he not left the assembly, and fled into the pure open air, the doctrine would have instantly operated as an emetic too powerful for all his resolution to resist. Let a young preacher imagine himself expounding a whole congregation into such sensations, by an indiscreet use of obsolete language, and let him turn a deaf ear to the above hints if he can.



husband ; but the character of divine love in us is, on the one hand to suffer no love contrary to itself in the heart, for *no man can serve two masters*, and the *love of the world is enmity against God* ; and on the other hand, love of God does not suffer any of the objects, the love of which is compatible with itself, to hold the *chief place* in the heart. This chief place is for God, to put him in a second place is to treat him opprobriously. Even to equal another object with him is to insult him, wherever he is, he must fill the throne himself, and, if a holy heart be an image of heaven, as it is in effect, God must reign there, and all must be submissive to him.

4. The emotions and acts of this love must be *infinite*, without measure as well as without subordination ; without bounds as well as without partition. The reason is, our love must resemble its object, and its object is infinite, and this is one sense of this command *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul* (9). But how, say you, can we,

(9.) *Love must resemble its object.* A great critick says, “ that many motions have some resemblance to their causes is a truth, that can be made clear by induction—sluggish motion for example, causeth a languid unpleasant feeling ; slow uniform motion a feeling calm and pleasant ; and brisk motion, a lively feeling that rouses the spirits and promotes activity.—A sound in a low key, brings down the mind ; such a sound in a full tone, hath a certain solemnity which it

communicates to the feeling produced by it.—A wall or pillar that declines from the perpendicular, produceth a painful feeling, as of a tottering and falling within the mind.—This is still more remarkable in emotions raised by human actions : any signal instance of gratitude, besides procuring esteem for the author, raiseth in the spectator a vague emotion of gratitude, which disposeth him to be grateful ; and this vague emotion hath a strong resemblance to its cause, *viz.* the

we, who are finite creatures perform infinite acts? I answer, the acts of the creature are in a manner infinite. (1) This infinity consists in my opinion in

passion that produced the grateful action. — In short with respect to all virtuous actions, it will be found by induction, that they lead us to imitation, by inspiring *emotions resembling the passions* that produced these actions." Passions indeed are ascribed to the divinity only figuratively in scripture: but is there any harm in pursuing the thought of this admirable critick, and applying it to christian love excited by the mighty acts of the invisible God, who not only opened inexhaustible treasures of temporal favours: but *so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life?*

(1) *Infinite.* Mr. Locke on this subject says, " the great God of whom, and from whom are all things, is incomprehensibly infinite. But yet when we apply to that first and supreme being, our idea of infinite, in our weak and narrow thoughts, we do it *primarily* in respect of his duration and ubiquity: and I think *more figuratively* to his power, wisdom, and goodness, and other attributes, which are *properly in-*

exhaustible and incomprehensible, for when we call them infinite, we have no other idea of this infinity, but what carries with it some reflection on, and intimations of, that number or extent of the acts or objects of God's power, wisdom, and goodness, which can never be supposed so great, or so many which these attributes will not always exceed, let us multiply them in our thoughts, as far as we can, with all the infinity of endless number!" *Essay* b. ii. c. 17. §. 1.

Our translators seem to use the word *infinite* in the same sense, Psal. cxlvii. 5. *He telleth the number of the stars: he calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power, his understanding is infinite.* אֵין סֶפֶר, non numerus. The emanations of his wisdom, and the acts of his power are beyond all our computations. — Nahum iii. 9. *Ethiopia and Egypt were her (No-Ammon's) strength* וְאֵין קֶצֶר *and it was infinite.* Besides all the natural advantages, which No-Ammon had from her situation, verse 8, there was no end of the succours, which she received from Ethiopia,

in two things. 1st. Our emotions go to the utmost extent of our power without coolness, or caution; and, secondly, when we have stretched our souls to the utmost of our power, we cannot be content with ourselves, and we acknowledge our duty goes infinitely beyond our emotions, and actions. Thus we ought to love God with all the powers of our hearts, giving up (if I may so speak.) our whole souls to him, and at the same time we shall feel a secret dissatisfaction with ourselves for not being able to love him enough. (2)

## 5. This

Ethiopia, as well as from Egypt.—The same expression is in the 2d chapter and 9th verse of this prophecy. And the same again in Job xxii. 5. *Are not thine iniquities infinite? Do they not exceed all thy confessions, repentances, and reckonings?*

(2) *We shall be inwardly dissatisfied with ourselves for not being able to love God enough.* “No man who studies himself or others, but must be sensible of a tendency or propensity in the mind, to complete every work that is begun, and to carry things to their *full perfection*.—Hence our uneasiness when an interesting story is broke off in the middle, when a piece of music ends without a close, or when a building or garden is left unfinished.—The same uneasiness is perceptible with respect to subjects that admit not any conclusion; witness a series that has no end, commonly

called an *infinite series*. The mind running along such a series, begins soon to feel an uneasiness, which becomes more and more sensible, in continuing its progress without hope of coming to an end.—The pleasure we feel at first, is a vivid emotion of grandeur, arising from the immense extension of the object: and to increase the pain we feel afterward for the want of a termination, there concurs a pain of a different kind, occasioned by stretching the eye to comprehend so great a prospect: a pain that gradually increases with the repeated efforts we make to grasp the whole.” *Elem. of Cr. vol. i. c. 8.*

David, considering the omnipotence of Jehovah, Psal. cxxxix. feels various emotions.—WONDER, *Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.*—LOVE, *How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God!*



5. This love, which has no bounds itself, *sets bounds* to every emotion towards other objects. It is, as it were, an immense fire, emitting a few sparks, a few comparatively faint emotions, toward inferior objects; so a king collects in his own person all the honours of his kingdom, and communicates some lucid titles to inferior subjects, (3) so the

SATIETY, *How great is the sum! PAIN, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it.* INDIGNATION against the unreasonable enmity of men, *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? I hate them with perfect hatred. I count them mine enemies.* What a resemblance between the objects of his ideas, and the emotions or passions produced!

(3) *Kings are fountains of honour.* As far as this article affects religion, so far it comes under the consideration of a divine. Pompous titles have often given an air of rational gravity to the most ridiculous absurdities, and errors uttered by men dignified with titles have wonderfully imposed on the credulous part of mankind, when the same errors, divested of these extraneous recommendations, it is plain, would have been utterly exploded. A freak in the head of *John Nokes* is of no value, and *Tom. the tapster* laughs at it: but this same freak becomes an article of consideration, when *Dr. Nokes* publishes it; when the

right reverend lord *bishop Nokes* adopts it, it is highly probable; and when his grace, the most reverend arch-bishop *Nokes* espouses it, it is absolutely certain; his eminence *Cardinal Nokes* carries it beyond certainty, and his holiness *Pope Nokes* crowns it with infallibility. Did the faculties of men rise and fall with titular dignity, there would be something probable in all this: but, as we are sure of the contrary, we must be wholly inexcusable, if we suffer ourselves to be determined in theological matters by the rank of those, who affirm or deny.

Civil titles of honour owe their existence to *princes*, who may truly be said to create them: but clerical titles are the offspring of *complaisance*, and princes only bestow, allow, and protect them. In the primitive church modern titles were unknown. *Cyprian* wrote to the Bishop of Rome, *Cyprianus Cornelio fratri salutem*, *Cyprian* wisheth health to his brother *Cornelius*; and in this style ran all the addresses of primitive bishops.

the sea distributes of its boundless waters to rivers, fountains, and rills. Not only must we refuse to love

bishops. After the time of Constantine, the clergy, infected with court-air, complimented one another in polite language, and with high-sounding titles; St. Jerom styled Pope Damasus *Most blessed Sir*, and St. Augustine and he interchanged similar compliments. In process of time, the clergy, long accustomed to titular distinction, were affronted, when their titles were omitted; St. Chrysostom says, "A most vehement heretick, conversing in time of persecution with a prelate, neither called him pontiff, nor archbishop, nor most religious, nor holy: but what? your reverence, your wisdom, your prudence, and, by addressing him by these common appellations, denied his AUTHORITY." I own, I cannot much blame this heretick; for, if the clergy availed themselves of popular complaisance, by it to assume dominion over conscience, it was time to drop titles so dangerous to christian liberty. The same title, that ascribes dominion to a priest, attributes subjection to the people. Perhaps, with a view to this our wise master might say to his followers, *Salute no man by the way*, Luke x. 4. *when ye enter into a house, salute it, and, if the house be worthy, let your*

PEACE, [that is to say, your civility.] *come upon it: but if it be not worthy, [if the inhabitants abuse your complaisance.] let your peace return to you. And, when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet, &c.* Mat. x. 12, &c.

To return, It was in the dispute between the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Pope of Rome, concerning supremacy, that, the papal faction prevailing, titles of superlative dignity were appropriated to the Roman Pontiff, and titles of comparative dignity to Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, and so on. "Hæ appellationes, says my guide, nulla lege præcipiuntur: sed a pio usu, et reverentia, quæ religiosis ac sacris viris debetur, provenit." *Guid. Pancirolo. Thesaur. lib. i. cap. 1. De titulis dignitatum Ecclesiæ.*

All, that our reformers say against academical degrees and titles answerable, is to be understood, I think, only of *divinity degrees*. "It is dangerous and unnecessary, says Wickliff, to give men the title of master or doctor in *divinity*, therefore in good reason those titles are to be shunned in the church of God." In *Serm. Domini in monte*. Luther, Zuinglius, Hufs, and others speak the same

love what God has forbidden, and choose to respect what he allows us to love: but, to speak properly, we ought to love only what he commands  
us

same language. *Dell*, one of the most eager writers against titles and degrees, expressly says, "I openly affirm, that degrees in *divinity*, (*for I meddle with none else.*) given by the universities to their children are plainly and grossly Antichristian, being most manifestly contrary to the word of the gospel." *Trial of Spirits—Testimony against Degrees.* 1654. By *William Dell*.

Had this distinction been made, these men would not have been taxed with enmity against all degrees, and all human literature; for all their design was to destroy the popular notions, that great learning was *essential* to the knowledge of christianity—that a good linguist, or a good mathematician must *necessarily* be an able divine—that illiterate men must *rely* on the report of graduates in matters of religion, and not judge for themselves—that ability to preach was in *none* but graduates—and that a vicechancellor, and not the choice of the *people* conveyed a liberty of teaching in the Christian church.

In the Ploughman's complaint, set forth in the reign of Edward III. the plaintiff says, "The glossers say, the people will more believe the preaching of a master, that hath taken a state of school, than the preaching of another man, that hath not taken a state of mastership." The answer is, "It is no need that masters bear witness to God's teaching, or word, that it is true and good, neither can any man by his state of mastership, which God hath forbidden, draw any man from his sin, rather than another man, which is not a master, nor will be none, because *it is forbidden him in the gospel.*" The writer plainly refers to Mat. xxiii. 8, &c. and means, by what he calls *the school-state of mastership*, that dominion over *conscience in religion*, which Christ forbids his followers to assume.

Thus another, speaking of the apostles, and primitive ministers, whom he contrasts with the popish clergy,

Whilome al these were low, and lisse  
And loued theyr flockes to feede,  
They neuer strouen to be *chiefe*,  
And *simple* was theyr weede.

Then,



us to love. This love should be in our hearts amidst all our other affections as a prince is among the officers of his army, or, to speak more strongly, as God himself is amongst all the creatures of the whole universe, giving to all life, motion, and being. (4)

6. The love of God is accompanied with *humility* and *fear*, as a salt to prevent corruption; and by this mean we are kept from degrading liberty into licentiousness. In effect, how great mercy soever God has for us, it is the mercy of a master. How great soever his paternal tenderness is, it is the tenderness of a sovereign judge. His mercy, which is so amiable to us, is never separated from his infinite justice and power; and one of the most essential marks of our love to him is to tremble and become nothing in his presence. These two things always go together. To fear him  
rightly

Then, addressing himself to a shepherd, in the habit of a priest, sitting on an eminence, and reproaching the shepherds in the valley with using *fond termes*, and *wilfulle words*, he says.

But if thee lust to holden chat  
With *feely* shepheardes swayne,  
Come downe, and learne the little what,  
That Thomalin can sayne.

*Shepherd's Calendar. July 1579.*

The objections, then, of primitive protestants lay not against degrees and titles: but against *clerical authority over conscience*, which, under cover of academical honours, oppressed the simple truth. This note, I own, has only a very occasional connection with the text of our author: but here I had room, and here I leave it.

(4) Col. iii. 14, 15. *Επι πασι δε τισις (ενδυσσας) quod ex ver. 12. repeti hic debet.) την ασανν.—Και η εσηνν τε Θεο BPABETETΩ. εν ταις καρδιας υμων.* A manner of speaking taken from the Grecian games. Let it sit judge exercising supreme authority. *Βραβεus* qui distribuit præmia certaminis.—*Pasor.*

rightly we must fear him as a father; and to love him rightly we must love him as a sovereign Lord. (5)

7. This love must in one respect *imitate* the love of God, from which ours proceeds: but in another respect it must *not* imitate his. It must imitate

(5) *We must fear God as a father, and we must love him as a sovereign.* This is a fine remark, and perfectly agreeable to the nature of things, and to the holy scriptures. We are naturally so formed, that our felicity depends not on the extinction of any one passion: but on the due regulation of all. Agreeably to this notion, Moses says, Exod. xx. 20. *Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.* Fear not, that ye may fear! that is to say, Do not dread God as a tyrant; for such a horror would incapacitate you for reverencing him as a father. This disposition accords with the highest joy, *Serve the Lord with fear—rejoice with trembling—and kiss the Son.* Psal. ii. 11, 12.

The old schoolmen considered fear in religion in a fourfold view, a fear of losing temporal advantages for the sake of religion they called a *worldly* fear; and this they said was *wicked*. A fear of divine punishment, operating reformation they named a *slavish* fear; and this they thought *imperfect*. That they

called a *filial* fear, which dreaded offending God; and, as the religion of most men generally arises at first from a mixture of fear of punishment and fear of offending God, they made this compound disposition a fourth sort of fear, and called it *initial* fear. Some added a fifth called *natural* fear. *Thom. Aquinas Sum. ii. 2. 9. Art. 2.*

The truth is, fear is a natural passion, which changes its name, I had almost said its nature, with its object. "A servile fear of *pain*, says one, attending a deprivation of good, and accompanied with a fear of *sin*, is a laudable fear, and John the Baptist endeavoured to excite it, when he said, Mat. iii. *O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* and Jesus Christ, when he said, Mat. x. 28. *Fear him, who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.* "Idcirco toties minatur supplicia futura, ut eorum timorem conciperemus, et resipisceremus." *Laurent. Beyerlinck. Theatrum. Tom. vii. in verb. Timor.*

See vol. i. page 290. note 1.—p. 287. n. 8.—122. n. 2.

tate his, by diffusing itself where his diffuses itself, and follow it, even when it is bestowed upon enemies, according to our Lord's precept; *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you,* (6)  
that

(6) *Pray for them that persecute you.* The pacifick disposition inculcated by our Lord in this, and the other verses connected with it, has never been more manifestly misrepresented, than when it has been explained so as to include a tame *submission* to blind guides in religion. Pray for your persecutors is equal, according to such expositors, to put out your eyes—reign your christian liberty—give up your bible—forswear the supremacy of Christ—and renounce the only principles, that will support any profession of christianity. I will state one case.

The Earl of Clarendon is pleased to affirm, that “there was not from the beginning of the long parliament one *orthodox* or learned man recommended by them to any church in England.” We recollect the history of his Lordship's life, his alliance to the crown, and all his various interests in the then reigning family, and in all their measures of government, and we expect the partiality of a man, who tells his own tale: but, after all, this as-

sertion would have been to the last degree inexplicable, had not the noble historian unfolded the matter. We take the liberty to ask his Lordship what he means by *orthodoxy*, for *learning* we will let alone at present. He answers, “It may be in that catalogue of sins, which the zeal of some men hath thought to be *the sin against the Holy Ghost*, there may not any one be more reasonably thought to be such, than a minister of Christ turning rebel against his prince, (which is a most notorious *apostasy* against his order) and his preaching rebellion to the people, as the doctrine of Christ; which adding *blasphemy* and *pertinacy* to his apostasy, hath all the marks by which good men are taught to avoid that sin against the Holy Ghost.” *Hist. vol. ii. Heterodoxy*, then, was a resisting of the civil and religious tyranny of the bloody house of Stuart, and *learning* was a proving of such resistance the sin against the Holy Ghost. This was court-divinity, let us step into the church.

*that ye may be the children of your father, which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.* But in another respect we must not imitate his love, for God's love to us is a jealous love, which cannot consent to our having any other object of supreme love beside himself: but our love

Divines went even farther than his Lordship, and, not content with harrassing, banishing, imprisoning, and ruining thousands for non-conformity to the *religion* of the prince, interpreted self-determination in matters of faith to be a *resistance* of authority, and thundered out *damnation* against all such offenders. With these horrid sounds the pulpits rang all through the reigns of James and Charles I. No text so courtly, none so proper to rise to preferment by working as this of St. Paul, Rom. xiii. 2. *They that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.* With what face could such men, or their panegyrists, reproach the parliament-preachers in the time of the civil wars with uttering seditious sermons! Dr. Walker, in his confused ATTEMPT, has collected many of their expressions; L'Estrange has done the same: and all their collections are attended with the bitterest reproaches, so that, I think, they have one and another, and all together fully and fairly balanced ac-

counts. Bastwick's prayer was, *From plague, pestilence, and famine, from bishops, priests, and deacons, good Lord deliver us!* and how many prayers, how many sermons, how many more pestilent instruments have been drawn up, and fired off by episcopalians against Bastwick, and all his accomplices!

Let one preach the divine right of *Kings*—another the divine right of *bishops*—a third the divine right of *tithes*—let all preach a divine right to do wrong—let Dr. Nichols declare, that “they are *atheists*, who affirm that government originates in the *people*, that this notion is borrowed from the *most pestilent atheists*, and can be defended on no other than *Atheistical principles*,”—and let them plague and persecute the world for not believing them: but let them not affirm, that Jesus Christ framed a *gospel* on their sorry principles to serve such secular purposes. He commanded his disciples to pity and pray for their persecutors: but they may do both without believing a word they say.



love to him can have no greater perfection than that, which arises from a multiplicity of objects: our jealousy resembles that of the prophet Elijah, who, being asked, when he was in the cave of Beer-sheba, what he did there? answered, *I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, and thrown down thine altars.* This was St. Paul's jealousy, when he saw the Corinthians turned from the purity of his gospel; *I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.* Indeed, one of the most indubitable marks of our love to God is to lament; when his name is dishonoured, his word neglected, or despised, and his commands violated. (7)

## 8. A

(7) *I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God.* The French version is literal. 2 Cor. ii. 2. Je suis jaloux de vous d'une jalousie de Dieu. Ζηλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς Θεὸς ζήλω dei zelo. i. e. propter deum, non meo commodo. This is an *hebraism*, and it may not be impertinent to subjoin the following remark. "Cum Linguae discendæ operam dare incipimus versione lingua notiori scripta indigemus; at si contingat nos numquam posse ejus auxilio carere, multa errorum nobis

imminebunt pericula, inter quæ hoc longe maximum est, ne putemus verba fontium eandem εμφασιν habere ac in versione videntur. Sæpissime enim contingit ut translationis vocabula nescio: quam vim habere videantur auribus imperitis quam non habent in ipso originali (ut vocatur) textu apud aures linguae adsuetas. Hebræi, exempli causa, passim conjungunt infinitivum verbo suo quasi nomen ita dicunt *moriendo morieris* et Homerus Il. ii. l. 788.

Οἱ δ' ἀγορεύς ἀγόρευον ἐπὶ Πριάμοιο δέησι &c. &c.

- - - Hinc denuo colligimus aures adsuetas linguis hodiernis facilem erroris occasionem præbere, dum quædam *emphatica* videntur et sunt in linguis aut hodie vigentibus,

aut hodierno usu inter doctos tritis, qualis est latina; quam *emphasin* olim non habuerunt apud Hebræos, Græcos, aut Latinos. - - - *Le Clerc. Ar. Crit. p. i. f. l. c. 4.*

8. A christian's love to God principally consists in *obedience*. (8) This, I grant, is not always a certain character; for how many persons are there, who abstain from evil, and do good, from principles of interest or fear rather than love? but, however, it is a negative character always sure; because it may always be concluded, that they, who do not obey God, do not love him, for all, who do love God, obey his laws. The reason is evident. All, who truly love God, have an ardent desire of being loved by him, and it is essential to love to desire a return of affection from its object. We cannot expect to be beloved of God, unless we strive to please him, nor can we please him without keeping his commandments. The love of God is always accompanied with an holy diligence to please him, and an awful fear of offending him. A true believer

(8) *Love to God consists principally in obedience*; not in extasies, and high flights of fancy. Let us hear brother Roger, a holy rhapsodist, whom cardinal Bona calls an *Extatic Man*. "Quid, putas, erit, si in intimo tuo intimus sit Deus? A quantis tenebris ad quantas duceris *claritates* per SPIRITUM ejus? Si illas, quæ in intimis illis, sive internis secretis sunt, nosse *intimas contemplationes*, si illas *lucidas illuminationes*, si illos *fervidos splendores*, si illos *simplices radios*, si illos *puros fulgores*, si illos *vivificos ardores*, si illos *pacificos sapores*, si illos *delitiosos*, imo *delitiosissimos dulcores*, si *res incognitas et inominabiles*, res tamen *experimentales* perfecte

possideres. Ah! homo, si hæc *experimento* nosse, puta quia, ut ego, tenebras ferres graviter vitæ tuæ. Quando autem erit? Putas ne videbo? Quando? Quando? Quando? Omnia in mora, nimium fienda hæc dilatio. Ah! Ah! Ah! - - - *Hæc verba silentii sunt!*" &c.—Abstruse enthusiast! Is this spiritual religion? Is it not rather the natural language of an odd animal, compounded of a fine fancy and a coarse lazy carcase? It is not the holy spirit of God. It is untaught genius bubbling through the thick lips of a stupid, inebriated, high fed monk. Vid. *Bonæ op. Comp. cap. xx. de amore*.

believer is always afraid, lest any thing through negligence or infirmity should escape him, and clash with his duty, or provoke his God. This made St. Paul say, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; and elsewhere, I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; (9)* lest,

(9) *I bring my body under subjection.* That is to say, I endeavour, as every wise man should, to regulate my sensual appetites by reason. This meaning is too simple and plain; and, from this, and other such passages perplexed with endless subtilties, have arisen profitable monkery in the church of Rome, and unprofitable austerities in some protestant communities, all contrary to the spirit of christianity. The friars, those sanctimonious hypocrites, have laid such scriptures at the bottom of all their rules, and their rules are pretended expositions of these scriptures. The Franciscans mortify their bodies for the benefit of their souls. How? They are called *Minores* for their meanness—*Nudipedes* for their going barefoot—*funigeri* for their wearing a rope for a girdle—*mendicantes* for their begging—and they may be called *frigidi* for their making it a virtue to sit without a fire in cold weather—*pediculosi* for their nastiness, and so on. The writer of the life of father Fourier du Matincour, having celebrated innumerable such virtues in the

life of his hero, gives, for an example to the brethren, one *infallible* proof of his mortifying the deeds of the body. And what is it? Why - - - “immediately after the death of this father, and as the brethren were laying him out, his habit, lying on the ground, was actually heaved up, and carried along the floor by the multitude of vermin that lodged in it.” As if this were not enough, the biographer tells a nastier tale, and boldly adds, “*Les delicats fronceront le né - - - mais l’odeur en est tres suave dans le ceil, et fort agreable aux aunes.*” *La vie du Pere de Matincour, sa Mortification,* p. 306.

Nicholas de Lyra, and others, have had the assurance to affirm that Jesus Christ was a *Minorite friar*, of the order of S. Francis; for which Luther justly reproved them, *op. tom. ii.* Others have attributed such virtue to the *habit* of the order, that, say they, “people buried in it, in virtue of the habit, and the merits of the brethren, instantly go to heaven. Docerent, homines sepultos in veste Franciscana, virtute vestis



*left, after I have preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away; and hence those prayers of holy men, teach me thy ways, O Lord, I will walk in thy*

vestis et meritorum ordinis, recta in cœlum evolare. O felices pediculos, exclaims Erasmus, qui in tam beata habitant veste." *Wolf. lett. Memorab. tom. i. &c.*

The order of S. Francis was so acceptable to the age, in which it was set up, that *fifteen hundred* Monasteries were presently erected; and the Father general soon offered Pope Pius *thirty thousand* brethren to assist him in his expedition against the Turks, and he assured his holiness, he could spare this number for war without suspending the religious services of the order.

Here are two odd circumstances, a most mortifying, disagreeable, detestable set of rules for subduing the flesh, and an immense multitude submitting to them. Were men different then from what they are now? Not at all. A converted Franciscan will blab the secret. These are his words, "When I was made a friar, a great number of people were present at the solemnity. I appeared in a spruce garb, had there my horse, my sword and pistols, and appeared with much gaiety and splendor. The head of the

convent advised the people to take notice of my pompous condition, and that I was willing to lay aside all those outward glories for St. Francis, his sake, and accordingly I disrobed myself, and put on the mean garments, which belonged to the order, and then made three vows of *obedience, poverty, and chastity*. After that took one and twenty oaths; now in the oaths I swore never to come on horseback, never to wear shoes, to obey my superior in whatever he commanded me, without examining the lawfulness of his commands, not to be ashamed to beg, never to be out of my friar's habit. But that which was a cause of disgust at that time unto me was this; the superior tells me, that I must take my former garments, that is return in the same posture I came, and go see my friends, and though all these things were against my oaths, yet he would ABSOLVE me from them. And this is the state of all the Irish friars." *Recantation Sermon of Anthony Egan, entitled the Franciscan Convert, preached at London 1673.*



*thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name; (1) may God make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that, which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ.*

9. The love of God is not only continued in a christian: but it is also inflamed under the rod of *correction*, contrary to that false love, which subsists only in prosperity, and is quite extinct in adversity; for false love in religion flows from temporal interest, and is dependent on irregular self-love: but true love to God regards his glory and our salvation, two things which can never be separated, because God has united them so, that they constitute the very essence of religion. Whenever, then, it pleases God to chastise us, these two great interests (I mean his glory and our salvation.) present themselves before our eyes; and, whether we consider chastisements as the fruits of our own sins, which have offended God, or as paternal strokes to establish us in holiness, they cannot but inflame our love. Add to these, that, when a believer

(1.) *Unite my heart to fear thy name.* Psal. lxxxvi. 11. *Range du tout mon cœur à craindre ton nom.* Alii vertunt, *lætifica cor meum*, ac si verbum esset a radice **חַרַּה** (our first English bibles read, *O let my heart delight in fearing thy name.*) sed potius est **יָחַד** quod *unire* significat: qui sensus optime convenit præsentī loco. Subest enim antithesis, quæ non satis fuit, ut par erat, observata, inter firmum propositum, quo adhæret cor hominis Deo ubi a spiritu regitur, et inquietudinem qua æstuat, hucque et illuc rapitur, quan-

diu fluctuat inter suos affectus. Postquam ergo quid rectum sit didicerint fideles, accedat firmus consensus necesse est, ne in pravas cupiditates cor ebulliat. Ideoque aptissima est in verbo *uniendi* metaphora, ex qua colligimus turbulentum esse cor hominis, distrahi, et quasi dissipari in varias partes, donec Deus ad se collectum in firmo et æquabili obedientiæ tenore retineat. *Calv. in loc.*

*Uni—Aduna—Constringe—Coge—Applica mentem meam ad tui nominis reverentiam, Poli Synops. in loc.*

believer sees his God frown, he cannot help apprehending in some sense that his wrath will go farther, that the Lord will forsake, and entirely leave him. Hence these expressions of David, *Forsake me not O Lord, O my God be not far from me. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?* (2) And hence Asaph says, *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?*

The Tyrians, it seems, when Alexander besieged them, imagined, they saw by some extraordinary motion, that the image of Apollo, in which all their hopes of protection were placed, intended to quit their city; to prevent this misfortune they fastened their god with chains of gold. (3) This I own

(2) *My God! My God,* &c. Psal. xxii. 2. Deus meus, &c. primus versus duas notabiles sententias continet: quæ etsi in speciem videntur contrariæ, quotidie tamen piorum animis simul obrepunt. Quod se a Deo relictum et abjectum dicit, querimonia videtur esse hominis desperati: quæ enim residua est fidei scintilla, ubi in Deo nihil auxilii sentitur? et tamen quod Deum suum bis appellat, suosque gemitus in ejus sinum deponit, non obscura est fidei confessio. Atqui hoc intestino conflictu pios exerceri necesse est, quoties favoris sui signa Deus subducit, ut quocunque vertant oculos, nihil præter

noctis tenebras occurrat. Atque hoc fidelibus accidere dico, ut secum luctando tam carnis infirmitatem prodant, quam fidem testentur. *Calv. in loc.*

(3) *The Tyrians fastened their god with chains of gold.* The tutelar god of Tyre was Hercules, to his altar they chained Apollo, a brazen statue, taken by the Carthaginians from Gela in Sicily, and by them presented to the Tyrians. Their fear of his going over to Alexander was owing to a dream of one of the citizens.

The 27th chapter of Ezekiel is a fine description of this famous city. The people of God traded there in  
*wheat,*

own was a foolish superstition : but methinks we may sanctify the thought, and almost learn a believer's conduct from it. When he imagines his God means to forsake him, he holds him (if I may be allowed to say so.) with chains of love, he throws around him the tender arms of his piety, he weeps on his bosom, and, to make use of a better example than that of the Tyrians, he *constrains* him, as the disciples did at Emmaus, *Abide with me for the day is far spent, and it is towards evening.*

10. True love to God is not *superstitious*. Superstition usually springs from one of these four principles. Either first from *servile fear*, which makes people believe, that God is always wrathful, and invents means to appease him, employing for this purpose ridiculous practices unworthy of humanity

*wheat, honey, oil, and balm, or rosin*, 17. All useful articles, says Mr. Henry, and not serving to pride, or luxury.

Tyre was, as the prophet calls it, *the daughter of Sidon*. Isai. xxiii. 12. And Carthage and Utica were colonies from Tyre. Ambæ a Phœnicibus conditæ, illa [i. e. Utica.] fato Catonis insignis, hæc [Carthago.] Suo. *Pompon. Mel. c. 67.*

The fate of Tyre, that is, of the old continental Tyre, and of the later insular Tyre, was foretold, and circumstantially described by the prophets, particularly by Ezekiel. Their vices and their punishments were both

expressly declared, before any human sagacity could discover their connection and issue; and the ruins of this once famous city preach the truth of divine revelation.

*Tyre shall be as the top of a rock, a place for fishers to dry their nets on.* "Such, says a good writer, hath been the fate of this city, once the most famous in the world for trade and commerce. But trade is a fluctuating thing: it passed from Tyre to Alexandria, from Alexandria to Venice, from Venice to Antwerp, from Antwerp, to Amsterdam and London, the English rivalling the Dutch, as the French are now rivalling both. — Trade is a plant



manity itself. (4) Or 2dly from a *natural inclination*, which we all have, *to idolatry*, which makes men think, they see some ray of the divinity in extraordinary creatures, and on this account they transfer a part of their devotion to them. (5) Or 3dly from *hypocrisy*, which makes men willing to discharge

plant of tender growth, and requires sun, and soil, and fine seasons, to make it thrive and flourish. It will not grow like the palm-tree, which with the more weight and pressure rises the more. *Liberty* is a friend to that, as that is a friend to *liberty*. But nothing will support it and promote it more than virtue, and what virtue teacheth, sobriety, industry, frugality, modesty, honesty, punctuality, humanity, charity, the love of our country, and the fear of God." *Bp. Newton, Diff. on Prop. l. 11.*

(4) *Superstition is ridiculous.* Quand les hommes n'ont pas de notions saines de la divinité, les idées fausses y suppléent, comme dans les tems malheureux on trafique avec la mauvaise monnoye, quand on n'en a pas de bonne. Le Payen craignait de commettre une crime de peur d'être puni par les faux dieux. Le Malabare craint d'être puni par sa pagode.—Dans nos siècles de barbarie—on leur faisait croire que St. Christophe, avait porté l'enfant Jesus du

bord d'une rivière à l'autre; on les repaissait d'histories de sorciers et de possédés, ils imaginaient aisément que St. Genou guérissait de la goutte, et que Ste. Claire guérissait les yeux malades. Les enfans croyaient au loup-garou, et les pères au cordon de St. François, &c. *Volt. sur la Tolerance, c. xx.*

When the monasteries were suppressed in England in 1535, there was found some of the *virgin Mary's milk* at eight places; the *coals that roasted St. Lawrence*, an angel with *one wing*, who brought over the head of the spear that pierced our Saviour's side, &c. &c. &c. *Superstition.* See vol. I. p. 216, note 5.—p. 218, notes 6, 7.—p. 244, note 6.—p. 252, note 1.—p. 255, note 2.

(5) *Men have a natural inclination to idolatry.* The people of Tyre and Sidon hearing Herod's oration, gave a shout, saying, *It is the voice of a God and not of a man.* Acts xii. 22. and the Lycaonians, on hearing Paul and Barnabas, said, *The Gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.* Acts xiv. 11. See vol.



discharge their obligations to God by grimace, and by zeal for external services; for which purpose they can perform a great number of any kind. Finally, from *presumption*, which makes men serve God after their own fancies, and establish such a worship as pleases and flatters themselves, without regarding whether they please God. (6) All these appear in the superstitions of the Church of Rome, the greatest part of which sprang from *fear* of the fire of purgatory, as mortifications, masses, jubilees, indulgences, penal satisfactions, and many more of the same kind. It is also evident, that some came from that dreadful *propensity* natural to all mankind to deify creatures; to this may be referred

vol. I. p. 182.—note 1. 183.  
n. 2.

“ Græci homines deorum honores tribuunt iis viris qui tyrannos necaverunt. Quæ ego vidi Athenis? quæ aliis in urbibus Græcis? quas res divinas talibus institutas viris? quos cantus? quæ carmina? prope ad immortalitatis et religionem et memoriam consecrantur. *Cic. Orat. pro Milone.*

(6) *Superstition proceeds from fear, hypocrisy, presumption, &c.* D. En quoi consiste la superstition, qui a pour object la divinité mal connue? R. A honorer le vrai dieu, mais d’une manière, qui n’a point de rapport à ses perfections: à croire obtenir de lui par une piété superficielle des grâces, qu’il n’a promises qu’à une piété solide. D. Alléguez en quelque exemple. R. Quand

je suis dans un lit de mort, si au lieu de réparer le mal que j’ai fait, je me contente d’en demander pardon, et de faire quelques résolutions légères de n’y plus tomber, si j’espère que dieu me fera favorable à cause de ces démarches, je rends à dieu des honneurs, qui n’ont point de rapport à ses perfections: je crois obtenir de lui par une piété superficielle des grâces, que je ne devois attendre que d’une piété solide. *Saur. Catechif. prem. part f. 8.*

Of all superstitions (says Mr. Voltaire) is not hating a neighbour for his opinions the most dangerous? and is it not evident, that it would be far more reasonable to adore the most paltry relicks, the milk and the shift of of the virgin Mary, than to detest and persecute a brother? *Sur Tolérance. c. xx.*

referred the worshipping of images, the invocations of saints and angels, the custom of swearing by creatures, the adoration of relicks, pilgrimages, the adoration of the host, and many such things. Nor is it less true, that *hypocrisy* produced others, as beads, chaplets, rosaries, prayers by tale, frequent fasts, visiting holy places, &c. And finally some came from human vanity and *presumption*, as festivals, processions, the magnificence of churches, and, in general, all pompous ceremonies in the worship of God. All these are contrary to the love of God; which is free from superstition. (7) It is superior to servile fear, and accompanied with a persuasion that God is good, and that he loves us. It has only God for its object, it acknowledges between God and his creatures, however amiable the latter may be, an infinite distance, and consequently cannot bestow any part of that worship upon them, which is due to him alone. It is sincere and solid, more attentive to the interior than

to

(7) *Love to God is not superstitious.* The church of Rome, as our author observes, is extravagantly superstitious, or rather stupid, on this article. How unintelligible is James Suarez! "The spiritual life consists of 15 degrees. 1. *Intuitio veritatis.* 2. *Secessus animæ ad interiora.* 3. *Silentium spirituale.* 4. *Quies.* 5. *Unio.* 6. *Auditio loquelæ Dei.* 7. *Somnus spiritualis.* 8. *Ecstasis.* 9. *Raptus.* 10. *Carni, et sanctorum apparitio corporalis.* 11. *Eorundem apparitio imaginaria.* 12. *Visio intellectualis.* 13. *Visio*

*Dei in caligine.* 14. *Admirabilis visio Dei, disjecta caligine.* 15. *Visio clara, et intuitiva Dei, quæ licet propria sit beatorum in cælo, fuit tamen quibusdam sanctissimis viris etiam in hac vita concessa.* *Alvarez, tom. iii. lib. 5. p. 3. apud Bon.*

All these steps *ad felicissimas cum Deo nuptias*, it seems, may be taken in a short time. *Si vult homo, in una die uque ad vesperam pervenit ad menjuram divinitatis, aspirationum enim mediante usu dixit Abbas Alois. Bonæ. Card. Compend. cap. ix.*

to the outward appearance; for, having its principal seat in the heart, it rectifies a man's sentiments, whence as from a sacred source good works flow. In a word, it is humble and submissive to the will of God, which it regards as the only rule of its duty, without paying any respect to the vanity of sense or the caprice of the human mind. (8)

## II. Genuine

(8) *The church of Rome is superstitious.* What Mr. Claude says of the church of Rome is too true of great numbers of her members: but is it not also true of some protestants, who with fewer ceremonies have perhaps as little religion as many of them? Let us not imitate their uncharitableness: but, where they are amiable, admire them. What some of them think the following short extracts will shew.

“ Indeed my brethren all exterior worship relates to the renewing of the heart as its principal end. Every action of piety which does not tend to establish the kingdom of God within us is vain. Every religious performance, which subsists always with our passions, which leaves always in our hearts the love of the world, and its criminal pleasures, which does not touch our hatreds, our jealousies, our ambitions, our worldly attachments, our indolences, is rather a semblance of virtue, than virtue itself. *We are only before God what we are in heart, and affection,*

he respects nothing in us but our love: he will be the object of all our desires, the end of all our actions, the principle of all our affections, the governing power of our whole souls; all, that does not flow from these dispositions, all, that does not either conduct us to, or establish us in these, however shining before men, is nothing but *a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.*

All religion in this sense is in the heart. God only manifested himself to men, he only formed a visible church upon earth, he only established majestick ceremonies, efficacious sacraments, magnificent altars, various duties, the whole exterior of his worship, to conduct men to the inward duties of love and praise; and to form to himself a people pure and holy, innocent and spiritual, who might glorify him for ever and ever.” *Massillon on true Worship, tom ii. Careme.*

“ There is no other worship but love, says St. Austin: it is the kingdom of God within us, it is adoration in spirit,



11. Genuine love to God is tranquil and *peaceable*, acquiescing in the ways of providence without

spirit and in truth, it is the only end, for which God created us, he gave us love only in order to our loving him. Order must be re-established, and the disorder, which has prevailed, must be reversed. God who is all in all, must fill the place, which self occupied once as if it were all in all—make men think thus, and all doubts will be dissipated, all the tumults of the human heart appeased, and all the pretexts of irreligion and impiety will vanish of themselves. I will not reason, I will not ask any thing of the man, I leave him to his love; let him but love the infinitely lovely God, and let him endeavour to please him, and what pleases him cannot but be the purest religion. This is perfect worship.—But what becomes, you will ask, of outward worship? Give me a society of men, who consider themselves as one family, whose father is in heaven, who live only to love God, and themselves and each other for his sake—there is no need to ask, where is his worship, or does he require any? all, that is done to honour, obey, and acknowledge his favours, is a continual worship obvious to all. What would it be then, if all men were filled with the love of God? their society

would be one solemn act of worship like that of the blessed in heaven—ceremonies are not essential to religion, religion consists in love and obedience.” *Fenelon. sur le culte de Dieu. let. ii.*

“ If the Holy Ghost speak to the heart by divine inspirations, he will be heard in the heart with submission and entire obedience. Far from his altars be that vain and frivolous devotion, which, by aiming to conciliate Christ and the world, the gospel and our irregular passions, offers to God only some exercises of exterior worship, and suffers worldly affections to live within. Nothing is so opposite to the spirit of God: yet nothing is so common in the world, there are many observers of rites and ceremonies, very few worshippers in spirit and truth.—The Holy Ghost was sent to condemn what the wisdom of the world had of vain and profane; to supply what was wanting in the law, by enabling us to act by faith working by love, and to consummate the truths of the gospel, by rendering an inward testimony of their truth, and by communicating gifts to faithful ministers to preach them. *Flecbier. Ser. tom. ii. Pentecote.*

out complaining, happy in itself without inquietude, and without chagrin, flying from quarrels and divisions, easy and gentle in all things, yielding in every thing, except in the service of God, and the grand interest of salvation, in which love itself is inflexible, and incapable of compounding. (9)

12. Real love is always *active*. Its tranquillity is not negligence, it is lively and energetical, always in peace but always in action; like the heavens, whence it came, without noise, in profound silence, perpetually moving and incessantly shedding benign influences, (1) it is not content to seek

(9) *Love to God is peaceable, &c.* Monf. Claude alludes, I presume, to that fine description of divine wisdom in S. James iii. 17. *The wisdom, that is from above, is first pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.* The apostle describes the two excellent qualities mentioned by our author. Divine wisdom is *easy to be intreated*, ευπειθής, *obsequious*; and it is also *direct, impartial and sincere*, ἀμεταμέλητος καὶ ἀνυπόκριτος. The word of God, the seed of this righteous fruit, is sown in peace by pacifick men. The consci-

ence of an upright man is inflexible, and his religion is exempted from the laws of complaisance. Barclay's preface to his apology for the people called Quakers has been always admired for comprehending most of the best arguments for religious liberty, and his address to his majesty Charles II. is equally admirable for its sincerity. St. James's direct complaisant wisdom is beautifully exemplified there. Complaisance is always a crime when it betrays conscience.

(1) *The heavens move in silence.* A fine image of operative modest love.

What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo?  
— Call it the breast-plate of the true high-priest,  
Ardent with gems oracular, that give,  
In points of highest moment, right response;  
And ill neglected if we prize our peace.

— They

seek God in his temples only: but it pursues him in houses, chambers, and closets, it rises after him to heaven, it enjoys him in the heart, where it entertains and adores him, it goes even to seek him in his members, and chiefly in the poor, whose secret necessities it enquires, and endeavours to relieve.

Finally, One of the greatest evidences of love to God, is, *spontaneous* obedience, not waiting for chastisements to awake us, after we have fallen into sin: but returning immediately to repentance. Indeed, tardy repentances, which come after we have exhausted the patience of God, and drawn the strokes of his rod upon us, are much more likely to be effects of nature than of love to God. Self-love has so great a share in such a conduct, that, if we do not attribute our repentance wholly to it, we must in great part. Yet, it is certain, when repentance does not flow wholly from love to God, it is not wholly heavenly and spiritual, it is a compound of heaven and earth, divine faith and human prudence; and so much as it has of nature and sinful self-interest, so much it loses of its worth and excellence. Genuine love does not then wait for carnal solicitations, nor till afflictions inform us of our state, it freely comes to our aid, and constrains us to return to God, even before  
we

— They rove for ever, without error rove;  
 Confusion unconfused! nor less admire  
 This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!  
 In motion, all! yet what profound repose!  
*What fervid action, yet no noise!* as aw'd  
 To silence, by the presence of their Lord;  
 Or hush'd by *his* command, in love to man,  
 And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,  
 Restless themselves. — — —

*Night-Thoughts. n. 9.*



we feel the effects of his indignation. So much for the characters of love. (2)

In

(2) *Characters of love.* The holy scriptures abound with characters, and are able *thoroughly to furnish the man of God.* There are characters of *individuals*—as, Abraham was *the friend of God*, James ii. 23.—Job was *perfect and upright*, one that feared God and eschewed evil, Job i. 1.—Stephen was *full of faith and power*, Acts vi. 5. 8.—Deacons were men of *honest report, full of the holy Ghost and wisdom*, Acts vi. 3.—Sergius Paulus was a *prudent man*, Acts xiii. 7.—Elymas was *full of all subtilty and mischief, an enemy of all righteousness*, Acts xiii. 10.

There are characters of *nations*—as, the Chaldeans are a *bitter and basty nation, terrible and dreadful*, Hab. i. 6, 7.—The Cretians are *always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies*, Titus i. 12.—Romans were *filled with all unrighteousness*, &c. Rom. i. 29.—Jews *rested in the law, and made their boast of God*, &c. Rom. ii. 17.

There are characters of *virtues*, as 1 Cor. xiii. Jam. iii. 17.—and of *vices*, James iii. 15. 1 Tim. v. 8. vi. 10, &c. &c.

To characterize is to paint, a slight defect loses the likeness, and a small addition produces a caricatura. This method of discussing a subject, therefore, requires great caution and attention, a cool

judgment and a steady hand: but well executed it is a mode of treating a subject, that produceth excellent effects, and discovers, perhaps sooner than any other, the man of ripe and regular judgment, and honest heart to his auditors. I shall add only one short example.

Mr. Saurin, who frequently uses this method, gives the divers *characters* of a virtue, in a sermon on the love of our country.

“Neh. ii. 3. *Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers sepulchres lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire.* By uniting the various circumstances, which we have mentioned, and by connecting the words of our text with the preceding and following verses, we find in Nehemiah’s zeal for the publick good, and in his love for his country, 1. a spirit of devotion. 2. a spirit of reformation. 3. a spirit of mortification. 4. a spirit of prudence. 5. a spirit of vigilance. 6. a spirit of firmness. 7. a spirit of disinterestedness. Seven characters of true zeal for the public good, and of a man’s love for his country.” Tom. iv. *L’amour de la patrie.*

Monf. Claude does not enumerate so many properties of love as Gerson reckoned

In regard to the *emotions* included in the words *patient waiting*, you may remark, 1st. that the coming of Jesus Christ being the subject in question, the expectation of a believer is a true and real *hope*, directly opposite to the expectation of the wicked, which is a fear. The latter consider Jesus Christ on this occasion as their judge, and enemy, who will avenge himself, punish all their sins, and plunge them for ever into perdition. Believers, on the contrary, consider him as their head, their husband, their saviour, who will come to raise them from dust and misery, and to exalt them to his glorious kingdom. The wicked in their fore-views

up. They are, according to him, *fifty*. *Joan. Gerson sup. Cantic. apud Bonam.*

Nor does he make love to God the principle of *music*, and of *all other sciences*, as others do. “*ad amorem omnia consilia reducuntur, neque musicam solum docet: sed omnium scientiarum, omnium virtutum, actor, magister, principium, et finis est.*” &c. *Bonæ Via Comp. ad Deum.*

His description of love does not altogether agree with that of St. Paul in the xiii<sup>th</sup> of the 1st to the Corinthians, because he treats of love to God: but the apostle of love to the *brethren*, the same spiritual affection viewed in relation to different objects. That the apostle speaks of love to the *brethren* may be gathered from the end that he proposed, which was to shew the Corinthian converts *a more excellent way*, to what? to harmony

among *themselves*, which was interrupted by jangling discords about gifts. The apostle approved of their zeal for gifts, particularly for the gift of tongues: but tells them—that *tongues were for a sign, not to them which believe, but to them which believe not*—and that, though they should speak with the tongues of men, and angels, it would not answer their end, it would not win over the partisans of one class to those of another: that must be brought about by some more excellent way, that is, *by love to each other*; without which their liberality and zeal would be hypocrisy; all their miraculous flights of knowledge, reverie; all their eloquence, confused jargon; love, and love alone would re-establish the peace of the church; for *love adds he, suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not, love vaunteth not itself, &c.*

views resemble the devils, who, at Christ's first appearance exclaimed, *let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?* (3) *art thou come to destroy us?* but the righteous imitate those, who attended his publick entry into Jerusalem, *Hosanna*, said they, *blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

2. This expectation is accompanied with an holy and ardent *desire*, as being an expectation of the greatest blessings. *Come Lord Jesus*, says the church, *Lord Jesus come.* Such was David's expectation, when he was among the Philistines; *as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.* The desire of a believer is not less fervent, or (to speak more properly.) it is far more ardent, when he meditates on his entrance into the heavenly Jerusalem, where we shall *hunger and thirst no more, for the lamb shall feed us, and shall lead us to fountains of living waters.* What the first

(3) *What have we to do with thee?* Mark i. 24. *Τι ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηθ;* quid nobis est tibi? est hæc locutio Hebræis et Græcis familiaris, i. e. *Quid tibi nobiscum*, supple, *rei, aut causæ est?* cur nos torques? non te vexamus: sed peccatores qui nostri juris sunt, et immundi ut nos. Eam phrasin, si ex usu latini sermonis interpreteris, contemptum videtur inducere, ita enim Latini aiunt, *Quid tibi mecum est?* at *Hebræis* aliud significat, nimirum, cur mihi molestiam exhibes?—*Grot. in Mat. viii. 29. 2 Sam. xvi. 10. 2 Kings ix. 18, 19. Jus-*

tin Martyr (or whoever was the author.) makes a just observation on John ii. 4. *ὅτι δὲ πρὸς ἀτιμίαν καὶ ἀπειθειαν γοῦναι ὁ δαίμων ἐμφανέται ὁ χριστὸς πεποικώς τι, μαρτυρεῖ Λυκάς ὁ εὐαγγελιστὴς λέγων περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι κατέβη μετὰ Ἰωσήφ καὶ Μαρίας ἀπὸ λεβερσαλὴμ, καὶ ἦν ὑποτάσσόμενος αὐτοῖς.* Quod vero nullo modo Christus contumeliose aut inobedienter quidquam adversus parentes egerit, ex eo apparet quod Lucas evangelista de eo testatur, Hierosolymis eum cum ipsis descendisse, et subditum illis fuisse. *Just. Mart. ad Orthod. quæst. 136.*



first appearance of Christ in the flesh was to the ancient church, that his second manifestation is to us, with this difference, that then he was to appear in grace, whereas now we expect him in glory—then he was to appear in the *form of a servant*, and in the *likeness of sinful flesh*: but hereafter he will appear in the *form of God*, thinking it *not robbery to be equal with God*. As he was then *the desire of all nations*, how should he not now be the desire of all believers?

3. This desire is accompanied with an *holy inquietude*, almost like what we feel, when we expect an intimate friend, of whose coming we are sure; but are uncertain about the time: or, if you will, such as an oppressed and enslaved people feel, while they wait for a deliverer; or such as an affectionate comfort feels, while she waits for the return of her lord. On these occasions days and hours move slowly, time is anticipated, futurity is enjoyed, and there is a prelibation of the expected pleasure. This is the holy inquietude, which St. Paul attributes to the creatures in general, saying, they *groan and travail in pain together for the earnest expectation of the manifestation of the sons of God*. (4) How much more then must believers do so?

4. But

(4) *The creatures earnestly expect the manifestation of the sons of God.* Rom. viii. 19.

*Expectatio creaturæ.* ad. verb. *Exserto capite facta expectatio creaturæ.* Est ipsa *ἡλπίς ἀποκατάστασιν*, more Hebræo; qualis est vel par-turientis, vel eorum qui capite erecto, et exserto collo stant, si fortè amicum è longinquo advenientem in auxilium suum expectantes pro-

spiciant. *Ἠτοις hoc loco com-plecti videtur hoc universum quod conspiciamus; universitas rerum creatarum, quæ tota vanitati, i. e. mutabilitati, et corruptioni naturali sub-jecta fuit, ver. seq. propter Adami culpam; secundum veterum sententiam, expectatur autem post universi conflagrationem multò melior, et purior machina.* 2 Pet. iii. 13. ubi, Hebraico more, *cali*  
et

4. But this inquietude does not prevent our *possessing our souls in patience*, for it does not proceed to

et terræ nomine, nova rerum summa five universitas intelligitur. Sicut autem frequentes sunt prosopopæi apud omnes scriptores, ita et apud sacros; ut cū *audire* jubentur *cælum et terra*; cū *montes* exultâsse; *maria et amnes* trepidâsse dicuntur; suprà cæteros autem Paulus amat *προσωποποιεῖν*, nunc *legem*, nunc *peccatum*, nunc *mortem*, nunc *naturam rerum aspectabilem*. *Creatura* hîc *expectare* dicitur propter appetitum quo omnia in propriam inclinantur perfectionem. Sensus est, q. d. tota hæc creatura irrationabilis, quæ hominum usibus servit, naturali quodam desiderio, expectat tempus, quo filii Dei gloria donabuntur, ut unâ cum eis quibus, quasi dominis, serviret, ipsa etiam gloriam (putà renovationem in statum meliorem, et ultimam perfectionem) accipiat. Hoc modo hunc locum veteres plerumque interpretantur; sed clarissimus noster *Hammondus* intelligit de *vocatione Gentium*; quæ avide expectant revelationem evangelii. Nec ratio quidem probabilis reddi potest cur hæc *περιοχή* per prosopopæiam interpretetur, propter unicam vocem *κρίσις* ut plerumque fit, quo pacto sensus redditur asper et nodosus. Quod si recolamus vocem istam *κρίσις* præcipue

de Gentibus à Judæis intelligi (ut Marc. xvi. 15. Matt. xxviii. 19. ubi *κρίσις* et *εὐγγή* se invicem explicant) facillimum ideoque ut opinor verum apostoli elicies sensum; viz. *Gentiles quoque anhelare ad libertatem evangelicam*.

Tacitus and Suetonius both say, an opinion universally prevailed all over the east, that about this time (that is a little before the destruction of Jerusalem.) one out of Judea should obtain the empire of the world. Whether this opinion came from the Sybilline writings, the books of Moses, or the prophecies of Balaam, we know not, certain it is, a glorious time they expected. *Suet. in Vesp. cap. 2. Tacit. hist. v. 13.* St. Paul, who read and quoted the heathen poets, was not ignorant of Virgil's Pollio written about forty years before Christ's Birth.—*Pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem. ver. 17, &c. Ecl. iv.*

Some think, Socrates had this time in view, when he spoke thus to Alcibiades concerning prayer. *εμοι μὲν ἐν δόκει κρατίστον εἶναι ψυχὴν εἶναι . . . ἀναγκαῖον ἐν ἐστὶ περιμένειν εἰς ἀντίς μαθῆναι ὡς δὲ πρὸς θεὸν καὶ πρὸς ἀνδράδας διακινῆσαι. Alc. ποτε ἐν παρῆσαι ὁ χρόνος εἰς τὸ ὡ Σωκράτης, καὶ τίς ὁ παῖς ΔΕΙΣΩΝ;*

to murmuring: but submits to the will of God; knowing that times and seasons are in his own power,

ΔΕΤΣΩΝ; γὰρ ἂν μοι δοκῶ  
ιδεῖν τετον τον ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΝ  
ΤΙΣ ΕΣΙΝ. Soc. ἕτος ἐσιν ὧ με-  
λει περὶ σε. *Plato in Alcib. II.*

The amount, then, is this. The heathens expected some great revolution to be brought about by some extraordinary person, about St. Paul's time.—St. Paul was well acquainted with their opinions—It is therefore natural to suppose, the apostle would speak on this article, and direct the eyes of the Pagans to Jesus Christ—This passage is capable of such a meaning, and it is highly probable this is the sense of it. The Gentiles are earnestly looking for *such a liberty* as the gospel proposes to mankind.

The question is, what liberty the *gospel* does propose to bestow on mankind. In days of yore, divines were not ashamed to affirm, that liberty of judging and determining matters of faith and conscience was a prerogative of the papal tiara, vested by the gospel solely and exclusively in *the pope* for the time being. At the Reformation, this prerogative in this kingdom was vested in *the crown*, and non-resistance and passive obedience, in *sacred*, as well as in civil matters, were said to be doctrines of scripture, and of the established church of England.

At the Revolution the crown agreed to *resign* this prerogative, and by the act of toleration did actually resign it in regard to the protestant-dissenters. If, then, an Englishman do not choose to judge for himself, the established religion is supposed to be his, and the established faith is reckoned to him for righteousness. If he choose to examine the established religion, and after examination if he approve of it, and embrace it, the wealth and honours of the national church are open to him; though, by the way, the church of England is not a wealthy church, the inequality of its emoluments make it appear so in a few individuals: but were all church revenues collected first into one aggregate sum, and then equally divided among all the clergy, much less would fall to the share of each than many protestant-dissenting ministers enjoy. If any minister thinking for himself cannot conform to the established religion, he may dissent, the law allows him christian liberty, that is, liberty to be a christian according to his own notions of christianity. Christian congregations of protestant-dissenters *impose* nothing, nor entertain any ideas of *coercion* in religion, and herein they excel



power, *if he tarry wait for him*, as St. Paul after Habbakuk says. Heb. x. 37. that is, be not impatient,

excel all other reformed churches, their ministers and people enjoying the most of any the sweets of religious liberty. One chief instrument in subverting popery is a comparison of the scripturally christian church with the papal on this article. Our *Delaune*, whose excellent *plea* actually defies all reply, published a small piece of this kind, which he called *εικων θηριος, the image of the beast*. In one column he placed the head, the members, the ceremonies, and the spirit of *pagan* religion—In a second opposite he placed the head, the members, the ceremonies, and the spirit of *popery*—And in a third he put the head, the members, the ceremonies, and the spirit of the *christian church*. Imposition is the *spirit* of the two first, Rev. xiii. 16, 17. and liberty and love that of the last. These parallels are edifying, and the whole church of Rome cannot answer those arguments for the reformation, which arise from them.

In regard to both clergy and laity, there is not a free man in all the pope's church. No one may profess to believe more or less than the established creeds contain: no man may perform divine worship in any other manner, than that prescribed by the

ritual: no man may choose his own minister; in a word, the whole community is in a state of infancy, and the old man at Rome is emphatically *the father* of them all. If it be enquired, what conciliates men to such a bad religion, which keeps all its people in fetters? we answer, their chains are of gold. If it be objected, a great part of their clergy are poor? we reply, two twenty thousands allure half a nation into a lottery. Happy the people who are *not redeemed with silver and gold*, either in hand, or in hope: *but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unblemished in his life, unspotted and disinterested in his motives!* 1 Pet. i. 18.

Some have enquired, why the ancient lawgivers pretended that their laws were derived from deities. Why did Draco and Solon attribute theirs to Minerva; Numa his to Egeria; Charondas his to Saturn; Minos his to Jove; Plato his to Apollo; Mercury Trismegistus his to Mercury? The proper answer is, because all mankind naturally attribute a right of religious legislation to God, and yield that ready obedience to what they think divine, which they would refuse to what they thought merely human. The ancient legislators were poli-

patient, do not murmur, for *he will certainly come, and will not tarry*. They are the profane only, who say, *where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*. We feel then an inquietude, but an inquietude blended with *submission* to the will of God. *Why, says the believer, art thou cast down, O my soul? why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.* (5)

## 5. This

politicians, and they adapted their plans to human nature. “It became a custom, says one, established by an express law of Romulus, not to raise any person to the royal dignity, the priesthood, or any of the publick magistracies, nor to undertake any war, till the Auspices had been first consulted, and this practice lasted above 700 years. For though it owed its origin to nothing but the ignorance of those early ages, yet in process of time, it became one of the chief mysteries of state-policy.” The ignorance here mentioned was not ignorance of God’s right to govern: but of the *means*, by which he made known his mind. *Hooke’s Rom. History* b. i. chap. 2.

“Thus, says another, the wisest of the heathens held the truth captive, and, by a wrong policy or base fear, bred in the minds of the populace superstitions as ridiculous as profane, of which

they [the governors] perceived the falsehood and vanity.” Let christian governors weigh this just reflection. *Rollin’s Rom. Hist.* vol. i. chap. 2.

(5) *Inquietude is blended with submission to the will of God*. God himself is the object of a christian hope, and eternal life is therefore eagerly expected, because God is to be enjoyed. *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.* Heb. vi. 19. that is, hope terminates on God, who inhabiteth heaven, of which the holy of holies was a shadow. “*Spem habemus usque ad interiora velaminis, id est, usque ad Deum ipsum, qui habitat in sanctum sanctorum. Spes generatim sonat expectationem boni, idque futuri, ardui, possibilis. Quia boni, differt à timore—quia futuri, differt à gaudio—quia ardui, differt à communi, desiderio et cupiditate*

5. This expectation necessarily includes a holy *preparation*, and such a preparation as relates to the majesty of him, whom we expect, the greatness of the judgment, that he will come to execute, and the eternal benefits, of which we hope to partake. (6) We must not imitate that wicked servant in the parable, who said *my Lord delays his coming*, and who, under cover of that delay, beat his fellow-servants. When Esther was to appear before Ahasuerus, she spent many days beforehand in preparing herself, adorning herself with her most costly habits, that she might appear before him in a proper manner. Such is the waiting of a believer, he employs all his life-time to prepare

*ditate*—quia *possibilis*, differt à *desperatione*. Est autem spes virtus theologica attingens Deum immediate, tam in ratione primi efficientis, quam in ratione ultimi finis. See that fine passage of St. Paul. Titus ii. 13, 14. *Beyerlinck Theat. in verb. Spes. Tom. vii.*

(6) *Hope prepares.* Agreeable to this is the saying of St. John, 1 Ep. iii. 3. *Every man, that hath this hope in him; purifieth himself, even as he is pure; that is, he takes his ideas of purity from Jesus Christ, and prepares to meet him with a special view to that kind of purity, which*

will best agree with the inflexible justice of his judge. This grace, hope, which is usually accounted the lowest degree of christian moral excellence, is alone superior to all the highest Pagan virtues, and produces far nobler effects. To what arduous services hath it excited the people of God! Indeed, hope, if it have a large object, is always a vigorous, bold, enterprizing disposition. It is so, when its object is natural: what must it be with such an object as eternal felicity! a felicity altogether supernatural and divine!

Quid non spes audet?

Sperat, qui curvo sulcos perrumpit aratro.

Sperat, qui ventis vela ferenda dedit.

Naufragus, hac cogente, natat per fœta procellis, &c. &c.

*Incerti auctoris, vid. vol. i. p. 420. n. 9.*



prepare for that solemn hour, when eternity will begin. (7)

The

(7) *A Christian employs all his life to prepare for eternity.* We have no book on this subject in English, that I have ever seen, beyond *Baxter's saint's everlasting rest*. It is a body of heart-divinity, abounding with the most animating sentiments, and all calculated on Mr. Claude's plan of making every day preparatory to ultimate happiness in heaven. "Thou sayest, says this excellent man, thy comfort is all in Christ: but, I must tell thee, it is a Christ remembered and loved, and not a Christ forgotten, or only talked of, that will solidly comfort." *Saint's rest, Part iv. Introduction.*

The second advent of Jesus Christ, of which our Author speaks, is considerable in three points of light. 1. As it regards each *individual*, this our divines place at *death*. 2. As it regards a future, more glorious state of the *church on earth*. A multitude of prophecies exhibit this object to our hope. 3. As it regards future, *final*, general *judgment*. A very honest laborious divine of our own has remarked twenty events, which he calls "natural *preparations* for the destruction of Anti-christ, and for the revival of primitive

Christianity." Some of these events follow.

"1. The revival of *learning* in Europe upon the retreat of the Greeks, with their ancient books, from the east into the west, at the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, 1453.

2. The invention of *printing*.

3. The recovery of *liberty* by the Swiss Cantons, and afterward by the Dutch.

4. The Protestant *reformation* begun by Luther, 1517.

8. Discoveries in *natural philosophy*, by the Royal Society—by Mr. Boyle—by Sir I. Newton, and others, which have broken all pretences to Atheism and irreligion from philosophy, and strongly confirmed the foundations of true religion, the being and providence of God, by the certain phenomena of the natural world.

9. The erection of several *societies*—for promoting christian knowledge—&c. &c.

10. The conversion of the *studies* of divines from school-divinity, &c.

12. Modern tyrannical *impositions* on the consciences of men wearing off by degrees.

16. The *translation* of the crown of Great Britain from popish to protestant successors."

I have

You might easily take the characters of *vices* from this pattern of characterizing virtues; however, I will add an example on *avarice* (8) taking for a text Heb. xiii. 5. *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have.*

1. Avarice is a disposition so gross, that it *obscures* the understanding and *reason* of a man, even so far as to make him think of profit, where there is nothing but loss, and imagine that to be œconomy, which is nothing but ruin. Is it not in this manner, that a covetous man, instead of preventing maladies by an honest and frugal expence, draws them upon himself by a sordid and niggardly way of living; and by this mean brings himself under an unavoidable necessity of consuming one part of his substance to recover a health, which by an excessive parsimony he has lost. There are even some, who

I have not transcribed the whole list of events mentioned by this writer, I am not sure that I have not transcribed too many. It was peculiar to this industrious good man to mix reverie with religion. *Literal Accompl. of Scrip. Proph. By Will. Whiston.*

(8) *Avarice is a vice. Avarice* is thus defined by an accurate writer. "Even things inanimate often raise emotions accompanied with desire: witness the goods of fortune, which are objects of desire almost universally; and the desire, *when immoderate*, obtains the name of *avarice*."

*Nec satiantur oculi ejus di-*

*vitiis.* Eccl. iv. 8. Aviditatis egregia descriptio, bene oculi: iienim soli fruuntur divitiis apud avaros. *Grotius in Eccl. iv. 8.*

An immoderate love of money is an extreme opposite to prodigality, the first saves all, the last spends all. A virtuous use of money is a narrow path, that lies between these two extremes. Moralists affirm, that of the two evils avarice is the greatest. Profuseness, say they, may be reformed by poverty: but avarice is incurable. An extravagant man benefits others, while he impoverishes himself: but a miser neither profits himself, nor any other person, &c. &c.

who bring inevitable death upon themselves, rather than spend any thing to procure necessary relief, and are impertinent enough to imagine that riches had better be without a possessor, than a possessor without riches ; as if man were made for money, and not money for man. (9)

But 2dly,

(9) *Avarice blinds reason.* We will not here collect trite examples of irrational parsimony. Moral writers abound with them. They tell us of one, who by will properly executed left all he had to himself—of another, who, when he found himself a dying, discovered no concern about that: but was extremely disconcerted at the approaching expence of his funeral — and of a third, who hung himself in a penny cord to save the charge of dying under the direction of a doctor. We waive these, and we will remark the wonderful power of interest over the understandings of ministers in church-controversy. The dispute between conformists and non-conformists exhibits a sad example of this. I do not scruple to put a thousand absurd positions to the account of an understanding blinded by *interest*; for, had these very positions been professed by the puritans, persecuted by the crown, and every where appeared in mean and contemptible garb; must they have been preached in a barn, printed in a cellar, and professed at the peril of all, that men

hold dear, is it credible these positions would have had such defenders? Truth, and truth only, can abide all these fiery trials. What conviction are solitary arguments like to produce in a mercenary man, who is to have five thousand a year for not believing them!

Here follow some of these positions. “The magistrate is empowered to govern the consciences of his subjects. Private persons have no right to judge, they are not masters of their own actions, nor ought they to be governed by their own judgments: but they ought to be directed by the *publick conscience* of their governors. If the magistrate impose any thing sinful, he, and not the people who submit to the imposition, is accountable to God for it.” *Parker Eccl. Pol.*

“When governors enjoin ceremonies in religion plainly, and diametrically opposite to the *law of God*, it is a *virtue* in the people to submit to them.” *Hickeringill. Greg. Pater.*

“It is safer to err, that is, to *sin*, with our church-governors,



But 2dly, this would be but little if avarice affected only the avaricious themselves, it goes much farther, it renders a man *useless to society*. It subverts the idea of our living to assist one another, for a covetous man is useless to the whole world. He resembles that *earth*, of which St. Paul speaks, which *drinketh in the rain, that comes often upon it, and beareth only thorns and briars*. He is an unfruitful tree, a gulph, which draws in waters from all parts; but from which no stream runs; or, if you will, an avaricious man is like death, that

vernors, than to separate rightly from them." *Long. Cont. Hales.*

"The people ought to submit to their church-governors, although a *doubtful conscience* may dictate the contrary." *Thomdyke Pond. et Mens.*

The writer, who relates and confutes these absurdities, laughs at the cant of *doubtful* consciences, as it is applied to the non-conformists. Church-champions debated at that time of day the rights of *scrupulous* consciences—*doubting* consciences—and so on; and, when the civil powers obliged them to cease brawling, and to allow liberty of conscience, they came into these court measures, they protested, because, compassionate souls, that they were! they really

thought something should be done for *the ease of doubting consciences*. Thus rolls the ball along! God knows, we, who best know our own consciences, we have NO DOUBTS. "Futiliter de RE, de qua lis est. Nos, qui non-conformes sumus, non hæremus judicio suspenso et pendulo; sed judicamus credimusque ritus illos, quibus nosmet subicere refugimus, hand absque gravi peccato a nobis posse recipi. De DUBIIS itaque non est instituenda questio." *Gul. Jenkins Refut. Grovii. sec. vi.*

This article would fill a volume: but this is a note, and I desist; adding only one verse of a father, on magistral authority over conscience, which always pleases me.

Jussum est principis ore Galieni  
Quod colit princeps ut colamus omnes:  
Æternum colo PRINCIPEM dierum  
Factorem Dominumque Galieni.

*Prudentius.*

that devours all, and restores nothing; whence it comes to pass, that no man is in general so much despised while he lives as a miser, and no man's death is so much desired as his. He never opens his treasures, till he is leaving the world, he therefore can never receive the fruits of gratitude, because his favours are never conferred till his death.

3d. Farther, this vice not only renders a man useless to society; but it even makes him hurtful and *pernicious* to it. There is no right so inviolable, no law so holy, which he will not violate greedily to amass riches, and cautiously to preserve them. How many violent incroachments! how many criminal designs! how many dark and treasonable practices! how many infamies and wickednesses have proceeded from this perverse inclination! If a covetous man is barren in kindnesses, he is fruitful in sins and iniquities. There are no boundaries, which he cannot pass, no barriers which he cannot readily go over to satisfy his base passion for money. (1)

#### 4th. By

(1) *Avarice is hurtful to society.* The writer, who first affirmed that private vices were publick benefits, was certainly either a very superficial reasoner, or a very bad man. Avarice, for example, subverts both the throne of God and the bases of human society. Trade depends on publick faith, and publick faith on private virtues. A miser, by subverting private virtues, subverts publick faith, and with it foreign and domestick com-

merce. It is not without reason, that divines enumerate the vices, which proceed from avarice. *Thomas Aquinas* numbers seven—Proditio—Fraus—Fallacia—Perjurium—Inquietudo—Violentia—Obduratio contra misericordiam. *Isidore* makes out nine—and St. Paul affirms, *the love of money is the root of ALL evil.* 1 Tim. vi. 10.

This vice has given occasion to a famous casuistical question concerning *usury*, which,

4th. By this we may already perceive how *in-compatible* this vice is with true faith, and *with the genius of christianity*. (2.) The spirit of christianity

which, say some, is prohibited by the express command of God. Exod. xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 35, 36. Prov. xxviii. 8. Psal. xv. 5. Ezek. xviii. 17. Some of our divines reply, “ 1. The law prohibiting usury was given to the *Jews*, it was merely forensick, and it has no force beyond that œconomy. 2. It was given with limitation to the *Jews*, and confined to the *poor*; if thou lend money to any of my people, that is *poor* by thee, thou shalt not be to *him* as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon *him* usury. 3. God, who never allows sin, did *allow* the *Jews* to lend upon usury; thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother, usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing, that is lent upon usury; unto a stranger *thou mayest lend upon usury*. Deut. xxiii. 19, 20.” The sum seems to be, the *Jews* might not lend money *upon interest* to the *poor*; they might not lend it upon *exorbitant interest* to the wealthy trader, or to the probable adventurer, whether Jew or heathen. An usurer with us is one, who lends money upon *unlawful interest*. Vid. *Wendelini Philos. Moral. lib. i. cap. 25. Riveti Explic. Decal. ad Exod. xx. 15.*

(2) *Avarice is incompatible with christianity*.—Mr. Saurin observes, that though the scripture speaks of some monsters of mankind, who died seemingly in rebellion against God, such as Pharaoh, Belshazzar and others, yet it is not for us to pronounce certainly concerning their eternal state, as it is not in our power to comprehend the treasures of divine mercy, “ there is but one (adds he) one only without exception, of whom I would venture to say, *he is certainly damned*. This one is Judas, of whom Christ said, *it had been good for that man, if he had never been born*; and the sin, which carried Judas to *his own place*, was *avarice*.”—The scripture, which tells us of many sins, into which pious men have fallen, does not (as I recollect) tell us of any one regenerate person left to this; nor is there such an awful mark set upon any other sin as that above-mentioned by Mr. Saurin. Well might he bid his people pray, *Lord incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness*. Psal. cxix. 36.

*Incompatible with the genius, or spirit of christianity*. The gospel may be truly called *the liberality of God*,  
and



nity is a spirit of love and charity, always beneficent, always ready to prevent the necessities of our christian brethren, kind and full of compassion, inquiring into the wants of others, and, without asking, seeking means to prevent them. But avarice on the contrary makes a man hard, cruel, pitiless, beyond the reach of complaints and tears, rendering the miser not only

jealous

and no man can (to use an expression of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xii. 13.) *drink into the spirit* of it, without imbibing a certain expansibility of soul, a generosity of sentiment; and this will operate, I do not say a holy indifference to gain, and a free distribution of money: but a magnanimity of religious action, which the little tiny soul of a bigot can never comprehend. I doubt whether a mercenary bigot have a soul. It should seem, he has only a hole to hide money in. Seriously, I cannot account for the partial selfishness, the unfeeling principles of some, who are reputed men of eminent piety, and who yet are actuated by motives of interest, that tend to persecution. Covetous servants of a generous masters how dare they monopolize the deity, and coolly commit the rest of their brethren to destruction! Such pretenders to christia-

nity, and such were formerly in this country the papists, and afterwards the high-church faction, would ruin a nation to secure a party. Strangers to benevolence, they were sons of violence, and, if they could obtain their own safety, they never considered what their safety cost the rest of mankind. A certain writer in the dispute between Hoadley and Blackall states the accounts of queen Ann, the established church, and the nation, in mercantile fashion, and proves that all *three* had been great *losers* by the jacobites, and were great *gainers* by the Revolution. This, I confess, is *ad homines*; and some weight should be allowed to the reasoning: but, after all, there are nobler, that is, there are disinterested motives. It would require too much room to insert the whole account: and that of THE CHURCH shall suffice for a specimen.

#### “ THE CHURCH.

Debtor.

1. To God, his word, and his providence for her being,

Creditor.

1. By her firm adherence to God, and the true protestant

jealous of the prosperity of his neighbour: but even making him consider the pittance of the miserable as objects of his covetous desires. (3)

5th. It

#### Debtor.

her doctrine, and her prefer-  
vation.

2. To the nation, for her  
privileges, and her revenues.

3. To our civil liberties,  
and the constitution and in-  
terest of our native country.

4. To her account of pro-  
fit and loss, upon the defec-  
tion and apostacy of some of  
her spiritual guides, and her  
lay-members.

#### Creditor.

tant religion in king James's  
reign.

2. By her humble submis-  
sion to the civil power, and  
her gratitude to the nation  
for her establishment and  
protection.

3. By her opposing the in-  
vasion of our liberties under  
King James, and joining with  
the nation in resisting popery,  
and arbitrary power.

4. By parting with her  
spurious sons, those false  
brethren, from whom she has  
been in continual peril, and  
by a supply of learned and  
sober persons, who heartily  
love their religion and na-  
tive country." *Divine rights  
of the British nation and con-  
stitution vindicated*, 1710.

The writer of the above  
was a friend to religious li-  
berty, I therefore revere him,  
and make no remarks, ex-  
cept that, if the church gain-  
ed by trading in revolution  
principles, she ought to have  
repaid her partners the non-  
cons for their share of the  
stock. From the dawn of  
the Reformation to the abdi-  
cation of James II. the non-  
conformists risked all on  
revolution principles, and,  
when their accounts were  
settled, they obtained a tole-  
ration, with a corporation,  
and a test act! They are con-

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tent: but then their content  
does not arise from motives  
of secular interest. "In quo  
differunt pastor et mercena-  
rius? In *quatuor* sunt diffi-  
miles. In *causa*—in *studio*  
—in *vita*—in *PERICULO*." *Hemming. Pastor. par. 2*

(3) *The miser covets the  
poor man's pittance.* This cir-  
cumstance aggravates the  
crime of avarice, and the  
disposition is beautifully de-  
picted in Nathan's parable,  
2 Sam. xii. 1, &c. and as  
finely exemplified in Ahab's  
conduct to Naboth, 1 Kings  
xxi. 1. &c. Sallust well de-  
scribes

K

5th. It is not without reason, that St. Paul calls avarice, *idolatry*; for one of the principal characters of this cursed inclination is a making gold and silver one's God. It is money, in effect, which the covetous adores, it is this that he supremely loves, this he prefers above all other things, it is his last end, his life, his confidence, and all his happiness. He, who fears God, consecrates to him his first thoughts, and devotes to his glory and service the chief of his cares, to his interests the whole of his heart, and for the rest commits himself to the care of his providence. It is the same with a covetous man in regard to his treasures, he thinks only of them, he labours only to increase and preserve them, he feels only for them, he has neither rest, nor hope, which is not founded on his riches, he would offer incense to them, could he do it without expence. (4)

6th. It

scribes avarice in this view.	exercitus, neque mœnia ob-
"Est bellua fera, immanis,	stant, quo minus vi sua pe-
intoleranda; quo intendit,	netret; fama, pudicitia, li-
oppida, agros, fana atque	beris, patria atque parenti-
domos vastat; divina cum	bus, cunctos mortales spo-
humanis permiscet, neque	liat."

(4) *A miser deifies gold.*

— For fordid lucre plunge we in the mire?  
 Drudge, sweat, thro' ev'ry shame, for ev'ry gain,  
 For vile contaminating trash; throw up  
 Our hope in heav'n, our dignity with man?  
 And *desjy the dirt*, matur'd to gold?  
*Ambition, avarice*, the two demons these,  
 Which goad thro' ev'ry fough our human herd,  
 Hard-travell'd from the cradle to the grave.  
 How low the wretches sloop! how steep they climb!  
 These *demons* burn mankind. — — —

*Night Thoughts, n. 6.*

St. Paul calls avarice not covetousness be once named  
*idolatry*, Eph. v. 3, 5. Let among you. A covetous man  
 is

6th. It is surprizing, and sometimes sufficiently diverting,

*is an idolater.* There will appear a singular propriety in these words, if we observe the people, to whom they were addressed. Let not covetousness be once named among you at *Ephesus*, for this vice would subvert *your* religion. Covetousness supports the *idolatrous* worship of *Diana*, which brings no small gain to *Demetrius*, and other craftsmen, who by their craft get wealth: but a covetous man among you is as weak as he is wicked, he acts on the *principles* of an idolater, and has not sense to perceive the community, in which his principles may be reduced to *practice*. See Acts xix. 24, 25.

The church of Rome, which is evidently an idolatrous church (see vol. I. page 183, note 2.) has chosen to arrogate to itself the character of superlative *holiness*. The last mark of distinction, it should seem, that could have been thought of for such a community! Pope Paul III. about 1538, appointed nine dignitaries to examine and report the state of the papal church, in order to reformation, if necessary. These commissioners drew up a list of abuses, and delivered it in form to the pope. The first

abuse, and that from which, as from the Trojan horse, all the rest proceed, is, that *the pope's will is the peoples' law*. "*Voluntas pontificis, qualiscunque ea fuerit, est regula, qua ejus operationes et actiones dirigantur.* Ex hoc fonte, sancte pater, tanquam ex equo Trojano, irrupere in ecclesiam Dei tot abusus," &c. This piece was published about 70 years before the council of Trent, and when the protestants availed themselves of it, it was suppressed at Rome. Protestants did not fail to republish it, and one, in a dedication to Toby Matthews, then archbishop of York, thus ridicules the papal pretence to eminent holiness. "*Scriptere multi multa, reverendissime præsul, de notis five signis ecclesiæ. Coëterus 3, Coccius 5, Bellarminus 15, Bozius 100, alii plures, alii pauciores notas assignant: at omnes de Romanæ ecclesiæ SANCTITATE, quasi nota præcipua, et infallibili, magnopere gloriantur. Sancta ecclesia—sancta sedes—sanctissimus pater—sanctitas vestra—Oh! quam sancta omnia!*" &c. What an odd idea must these people have of *holiness*! Is Rome the place for holiness! *Craspazou Confil. Delect. Cardinal. Præf.*



diverting, (5) to see in what manner all the other inclinations of a miser, good and bad, virtues and vices,

(5) *Avarice is sometimes diverting.*

Si dederint superi decies mihi millia centum,  
Dicebat nondum Scævola factus eques :  
Qualiter O vivam, quam largè quamque beatè !  
Riserunt faciles et tribuere Dei.  
Sordidior multo post hoc toga ; pænula pejor ;  
Calceus est facta terque quaterque cute ;  
Deque decem plures semper servantur olivæ ;  
Explicat et cœnas unica mensa duas ;  
Et veientani bibitur fœx crassa rubelli ;  
Assè cicer tepidum constat, et assè venus.  
In jus O fallax atque inficiator eamus ;  
Aut vive, aut decies Scævola redde deis.

*Martial.*

*Avarice is diverting.* I will not presume to say in what cases it is proper for a minister of Jesus Christ to render vice ridiculous, and so to excite the risibility of mankind against it: but I will venture to affirm, satire is one bloodless weapon of the christian warfare, and we have many examples of its use in scripture. *Behold! the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil! now perhaps he may put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever!* Gen. iii. 22. *Cry aloud, for he is a God!* 1 Kings xviii. 27. *No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you!* Job xii. 2. *Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise! Receive me as a fool, that I may boast myself a little. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they ministers of*

*Christ? (I speak as a fool.) I am more.* 2 Cor. xi. 19, 16, 22, 23. *I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Reward Babylon, the great, even as she rewarded you. Double unto her double. In the cup, which she hath filled, fill to her double. Give her torment and sorrow. She saith, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets!* Rev. xviii. 4, 2, 6, 7, 20.

It is fashionable to account the puritans of the last age a gloomy generation: but some people are not ambitious of fashion, and to them we may be allowed to say two things in favour of these gloomy people. 1. Was it fair to persecute and ruin people, and then to reproach them for not being merry? *They,*

*that*

vices, his love and his hatred, his joy and his sorrow respect and obey his avarice. They move  
or

*that wasted us, required of us mirth, saying, sing us one of the songs of Sion! Pſal. cxxxvii.*

3. *How ſhall we ſing the Lord's ſong in a ſtrange land! Alas! the Lord's ſongs would give you no pleaſure! The ſongs of Sion are not compoſed in your taſte! If we muſt ſing, compoſe our odes yourſelves! Come, ſet the five-mile act to muſick! Play away upon our liberties, and properties, and lives. Give us hunger, and thirſt, and nakedneſs, and want of all things! Hang our lives in doubt day and night! ſmite us from the ſole of the foot to the top of the head! drive us to deſpair, make us mad for the ſight of our eyes, and then reproach us for not being merry!*

2. Theſe people were not gloomy, on the contrary, there is a ſatirical vein of pointed wit, that runs merrily through all their writings, and electrifies their perſecutors as it runs. I do not ſay, their wit was as well refined as modern wit: that would be profane indeed! but it was the wit of the age, and they were chearful in the exerciſe of it. I could exemplify this by innumerable extracts from their polemical writings, and even by tranſcribing the titles of ſome of them: but I will only now

mention two things, which afforded theſe dull men ſome diverſion. 1. The ſhifts made to eſtabliſh the *liturgy* diverted them. When kneeling at the communion was firſt appointed in the Engliſh epiſcopal church, the foreign proteſtants were extremely offended at it, and Beza wrote to archbiſhop Grindall on the ſubject. If, ſays Beza, you have rejected the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, and the practice of adoring the hoſt, why do you ſymbolize with popery, and ſeem to hold both by kneeling at the ſacrament? kneeling had never been thought of, had it not been for tranſubſtantiation. Grindall replied, that though the ſacrament was to be received kneeling, yet a *rubrick* accompanied the ſervice-book, and informed the people, that no adoration of the elements was intended. O! I underſtand you, ſaid Beza, “ There was a certain *great Lord*, who repaired his houſe, and, having finiſhed it, left before his gate a great ſtone, for which he had no occaſion. It ſeems, this ſtone cauſed many people in the dark to ſtumble and fall. Complaint was made to his lordſhip, and many a humble petition was preſented praying for the removal

or rest, act or do not act, agreeably to the orders, which this criminal passion gives them. If he be naturally

removal of the stone: but he remained long obstinate; at length, he condescended to order a *lanthorn* to be hung over it. My Lord, said one, if you would be pleased to rid yourself of farther solicitation, and to quiet all parties, order the stone and the candle to be both removed."

A bible, that wants thirty-nine human articles to make it intelligible; a divine law needing the glosses of a hundred and forty synodical canons; an inspired prayer-book with a rubrick; these, and a thousand more are odd associations of ideas, and association of ideas by fancy makes mirth. *Advances of the Ch. of Eng. towards Rome, by Dr. Du Moulin, 1680.*

The other article, which they observed, *non sine risu*, as they said, was the beggarly treachery of their persecutors in regard to their *sermons*. "Puritan ministers! seditious and schismatical preachers! there was not one orthodox or learned man among them." *Clarendon. Hist. vol. ii.*

"Puritan preachers! mere pulpiteers! men, neither of learning nor conscience! poisoning in their schismatical lectures the people with antimonarchical principles."

*Dugdale Pref. to View of Troubles, &c.*

"Puritan preachers! a spiritual militia, neither parsons, vicars, nor curates; but, like the order of the friars predicants, tickling the ears of the people with legends and miracles, debauching the people with principles of disloyalty! all their pulpit harangues are nothing but the repeated echoes of the votes, orders, remonstrances, and declarations of Westminster. *Nelson's Collections.*

"Preachers! men of no learning, no conscience, furious promoters of dangerous innovations, turbulent and seditious in disposition, scandalous in life, imposed upon parishes to infect and poison the minds of our people." *Declar. of Charles I. Aug. 12, 1642.*

Dr. Walker has collected a whole folio of articles tending to prove these charges, and the abused noncons laugh at his ATTEMPT, as he calls it. For why, courteous reader? why, because some of these "grave, worthy, protesting, sweet, modest, ingenious, learned, loyal true sons of the church of England; these men of great spirit, well beloved of the gentry, great agents and sufferers

naturally civil, mild, and agreeable in his conversation, he will not fail to lay aside all his civilities, and good manners, when his avarice tells him he may get something by doing so: and, on the contrary, when he has received some injury, when some insult has been offered him, which is a just ground of resentment, you may see in an instant his wrath is removed, and all his vehemence abated, in hope of a little money offered to appease him, or in fear of a small expence to gratify his resentment. If an object of publick joy, or  
 sorrow

ferers for his majesty" (see Dr. Walker's account of Dr. Owen, bishop of St. Asaph, and Dr. Lloyd, dean.) I say, these accusers of their brethren were so mean as to preach the sermons of the very men, whom they abused. Odd fate of a puritanical sermon! Studied in a jail, preached under a hedge, printed in a garret, sold at a pedlar's stall, bought by a priest's footman, uttered from a pulpit in a cathedral, applauded by a bishop, and ordered to press by a grave session of gentry! *Risum teneatis amici!*

Mr. Jenkins published a commentary on Jude. His antagonist, Dr. Grove, taxed him with plagiarism, because he had made a few quotations without saying whence he had them. Jenkins retorted, "Illum tamen ab hac imputatione prorsus quoque liberare nequeo, qui, cum concionaretur in festo S. Micæ-

elis apud templum Paulinum, frequenti auditorum corona, et tunc temporis presente patruo suo Grovique patrono Humphredo Episcopo Londinensi, (a quo nullus dubito quin summas pro labore suo egregio laudes concionator reportaverit.) totam suam concionem verbatim pene integram desumpsit e commentariis *Jenchini* in versum Judæ nonum de disceptatione Michaelis cum diabolo. Ut omittam quod apud tabernaculum suum in jejuniis pro Londini conflagratione, concionem suam deprompsit e *prædicti authoris* commentario in Judæ versum septimum, de incendio quo Sodoma deleta fuit. Neque duos alios de tuis æqualibus a plagiariorum labe penitus immunes fuisse, qui, ut satis mihi compertum est, totum *Jenchini* commentarium in Judam per singulas dominicas a capite ad calcem, in concionibus suis populo recitarunt."



sorrow offer itself to his view, simply considering it in a general view, he will be glad or sorry according to the nature of the thing in question: but should this occasion of public joy interest him ever so little, or in any manner prejudice his pretensions, all on a sudden you will see all his joy turned into sorrow. In like manner, when a publick calamity gives him an opportunity of gaining any thing, all his sorrow is turned into joy. If he ardently loves any one he will love him no longer, if he begin to cost him any thing; avarice will turn all his love into indifference and coldness. If reason and common honesty oblige him to be of a party, who have justice on their side, he will maintain, and even exaggerate their rights, and defend the equity of them, while his purse is not engaged: engage his purse, and it is no longer the same thing; what was just is become now unjust to him, he has quickly *whys*, and *howevers* in his mouth—but, *however*, we were mistaken in such a point,—*why* should we be obstinate in such, or such a thing? &c. (6)

In

runt." &c. *Refutatio Grovii Respons. ad Celeusma.*

This great and excellent servant of Christ, who was descended by his mother's side from Rogers, the proto-martyr, died in Newgate, after a confinement of seventeen weeks for conscience-sake. 1685. *Dr. Calamy's Acc. vol. ii. London.*

I might add another source of puritanical mirth arising from a contrast of qualifications of churchmen with the

epithets which were given them by one another. Adm. Reverendissime — Dignissime — Ornatissime — Venerabilissime — Benignissime — Scientifcentissime — Singularissime — Sociabilissime — Vigilantissime — Pientissime — Sanctissime — Beatissime — &c. &c. But I forbear. Vid. *Hen. Bebelius de Abus. Ling. Lat.*

(6) *Avarice governs the tempers of interested men, and directs their actions in publick events. Were we to apply this*

In fine, his avarice gives the colour and tint to every subject, it is the sole rule, and measure, it makes things good or bad, just or unjust, reasonable or unreasonable according to its pleasure. Crimes are no longer crimes, if they agree with avarice, virtues are no longer virtues, when they oppose it. She reigns over the ideas of a miser's mind and the emotions of his heart, sole arbitress in the judgments of his mind, sole directress in the consultations of his heart, sole governess of all his passions. (7) Aristotle's definition of nature can

this to church-interest, and to exemplify it by history, we could not choose a period more proper than that from the restoration of Charles II. to the death of queen Ann. The several turns of the times, the variety of temper discovered, the veering about of church-men according as the wind of interest blew, are finely described, for the greater part of the time, by our excellent historian Neal, of whose fidelity no party has any just cause to complain, except that of the Baptists. (That they have, their historian Crosby hath most clearly shewn, in his history of the Baptists, and particularly in his preface to it.) The disposition of too many of the clergy of those times is properly enough ridiculed in the well-known humorous song called *The Vicar of Bray*.

(7) *Avarice reigns over a miser*. Mr. Claude compares avarice to an absolute em-

press extending her despotism over an abject slave. The books of Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs, assimilate avarice to several things, each significant and expressive: the following is very beautiful in its kind. Eccl. vi. 3. *An untimely birth is better than a miser*. "Comparantur in his abortivus et avarus, quia frustra natus uterque, cum finem nascendi neuter adeptus. . . In eo præfertur abortivus, quod ut bona, sic nec mala vitæ ulla sit perpeffus: avarus vero bonis vitæ caruit, ætatem vero suam in mille malis et ærumnis transegit." *Del Rio Adag. Sac. Par. ii. Ad. 307*.

Prov. xvii. 8. *A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth it prospereth*. A bribe, like a diamond, sparkles in the eyes of interested men, and money in all places, and on all occasions will prevail with them.

can be no where better applied, she is the principle of motion and of rest; for she does all that the centurion in the gospel did, she says to one Go, and he goeth, to another Come, and he cometh, Do this, and he doth it: yea she goes farther than the centurion went; for she says Pause, and all things pause, Cease, and all things cease to be. (8)

#### IV. OBSERVE

One of our divines, discoursing on the inhumanity of the priest and Levite, mentioned by our Lord, Luke x. 31, 32. well observes—"that it is unfair to tax the whole body of the clergy with avarice, and inhumanity—that at the accession of Constantine great riches, and with them great temptations to avarice poured into the church—that too many church-men, and particularly those in the church of Rome, especially the religious fraternities, had been sad examples of avarice—that it was a sin more scandalous in them than in others—but that, as there were some Zachariahs among the priests, and some Barnabasses among the Levites, so there were some liberal men among the Romish clergy, and more in other communities—that soldiers, magistrates, and merchants had disgraced war, polity, and trade with avarice—but that it would be unfair to blame the whole order of either—and that there was nothing in the ministry it-

self to excite avarice: but quite the contrary," &c. *Beaufobre Disc. sur Nov. Test.* D. i.

(8) As we cannot form an idea of love, hope, or avarice in the abstract, or independent of a person, it should seem the characters of vices, or virtues would be best described in their subjects, where scripture affords examples. Where all the characters of a vice, or a virtue are not to be found in one person, several examples may be united to give a full description of the article in question. Just description is extremely difficult: but what an encouragement to reflect, that it is not in the power of human nature to love vice, or hate virtue, appearing in their own colours!

Mr. Saurin characterises patriotism in the person of Nehemiah, and covetousness in the unhappy Judas. After a just but terrible description of the vice in the man,—declaring, that he trembled at the idea of such a monster—and exclaiming with Virgil, O execrable

## IV.

OBSERVE THE RELATION OF ONE SUBJECT TO ANOTHER. (9)

For example, always when in scripture God is called a *Father*, the relation of that term to *children*

crable love of money! and so on—he asks, whether this odious picture resemble Judas only? he goes on, and compares his *bearers* with Judas, till he pities Judas, and turns all his indignation against them. His design is to excite a perfect hatred of avarice, and thereby to deliver his hearers from its guilt and power at once. These applications sometimes produce great effects.

How richly the inspired writings are stored with materials of this kind every body knows; indeed we may say of many beauties of the bible, as Mr. Addison in the *freeholder* says of a passage in Kings (2 b. viii. c. 11, 12, 13. verses.) they only want a place in some Greek and Roman writer to be universally admired.

The orator's description of the idle lives of his countrymen is justly admired, η βαλεθε, επε μοι, περιούϊες αλληλων συνθανεσθαι λεγέσθαι τι καινον; . . . . τεθνηκε ο φιλιππος; & μη δε, αλλ' αθενει. tell us, Do you rather incline according to your usu-

al custom, to saunter about idle, asking each other what news? . . . is Philip dead? No: but by Jove he is sick, &c. *Demost. Phil I.* Compare this description of the Corinthian church with it, Λεγω δε τοσο, οτι εκαστω υμων λεγω, εγω μεν ειμι Παυλε, εγω δε Απολλω, εγω δε Κεσα, εγω δε Χριστ. Μεμερισαι ο Χριστος; μη Παυλῳ εσαυρωθε υπερ υμων; η εις το ονομα Παυλε εβαπτισθητε; ευχαριστω τω Θεω, &c. Is the figure erotefis admired in the passage above mentioned? observe this in Mat. xi. 7. Τι εξηλθετε εις την ερημον θεασασθαι; καλαμον υπο ανεμ. & σαλευομενον; αλλα τι εξηλθετε ιδειν; ανθρωπον εν μαλακοις ιματιοις ημικετυμενον; ιδε, οι τα μαλακα φορεις εν τοις οικοις των βασιλεων εισιν. αλλα τι εξηλθετε ειδειν; περρητην; ναι λεγω υμιν η περιωδερων περρητη.

(9) *Observe the relation of subjects to each other.* Nothing introduces a greater confusion into a discourse of any kind than a violation of this rule. The putting together of single, unconnect-



*children* is evident, and we are obliged not only to remark the paternal inclinations, which are in God

ed, irrelative ideas produces a perfect wilderness, and, if a discourse so composed be animated with the ill tempers of the composer, it resembles a wilderness full of tigers and lions, apes and panthers, ridiculous and terrible beasts. A violation of this rule produced almost all those expressions, which some zealots have collected and published under the title of *Dissenters Sayings*, and from which they pretended to derive proofs of principles, which the preachers never held. The truth is, the fashion of the last age in both preaching and praying was to compose of all manner of gatherings, without that accurate, asserting method, which maturer judgment has since introduced. It was not the fashion of any whole party, for each had judicious men: but it was the prevailing mistake of the bulk in all parties. There is, however, this difference between the publications of two parties; The episcopal party published by command of the head of the church, the church therefore is accountable: but among the other parties individuals only were censurable.

“ O Lord, who didst deliver *David* thy servant, . . . let King *Charles* find safety

under the shadow of thy wings.” What *relation* was there between David and King Charles I.? *Prayer for Preservation of the King.* 1643.

“ Let the happiness of the success of our sovereign flow to the very skirts of his people.” This thought seems to be taken from Psal. cxxxiii. 2. ointment went down to the skirts of Aaron’s garments. What have the skirts of Aaron to do with the poor in an English workhouse? *Thanksgiv. for Vict. at Edge-hill.*

“ Lord! look to the righteousness of our cause. See the seamless coat of thy Son torne, the throne of thine anointed trampled on, thy church invaded by sacrilege, and thy people miserably deceived with lies.” What *relation* was there between the seamless coat of Christ, the sale of church-lands, and the lies of the clergy? *Thanksgiv. for Vict. in the North. All published by his Majesty’s command.* 1643.

The compiler of these prayers, telling God Almighty a history of rebellion, says, among other things, “ We murmured against *Moses*;” and with equal propriety might I say, You did more than murmur against *Moses*, you cut his head off before Whitehall!

The

God towards us, and the advantages which we receive from his love: but also the duties to which

The association of such irrelative ideas into one expression is arbitrary and licentious, and produces very bad effects both by leading off the attention from a subject, and by confounding it with other subjects, which have nothing to do with it. Suppose a prayer to begin, O Lord, who didst form the crooked *serpent*, blest and direct the twelve *judges*! would not this mode of expression seem to convey a most detestable idea of their Lordships and the law? or suppose a minister before preaching to pray, O thou, who didst create *cattle*, and *creeping things*, assist me to preach thy word effectually to day! would not this look as if the worthy man thought himself a beetle or a beast? In the examples above quoted, there is *no* relation at all between the ideas, I will add an example of a more frequent mistake, that is, an association of ideas irrelative in themselves, and that *intermediate* idea, which would relate them to each other implied. I'll take the first at hand.

“Questionless, there cannot be a greater blemish unto the honour, dignity, worth, and credit of any Christian prince or potentate, of any Christian magistrate, noble-

man, general, captain, prelate, maister, superiour, or the like, who should be patternes of temperance and sobriety unto others, than for every infamous, swinish, riotous, prophane, and dissolute rorer, ruffian, gull-gallant, or pot-companion, every base and rascal tapster, pedler, tinker, cobbler, hostler, mechanick, clowne or footboy, to thrust their names into their pots, and to drink their healths.” *William Pryne's Healthes-sicknesse against drinking healths.* 1628.

“There cannot be a greater blemish unto the dignity of the king than for a tinker to drink his health.” Before this can be proved to be *any blemish* to his majesty some *intermediate idea* must be admitted to *connect* the tinker and the king, some unworthy action on his majesty's part must be supposed: but as no such action can be supposed, it is abominable to insinuate it. Without it, however, there is no relation between the dignity of a prince and the disorders of his people, nor does the impropriety of their actions (supposing, what is not allowed, that it were an impropriety to drink the king's health) imply any defect in the character of the prince.

The

which we are bound as children of such a father. The same may be said of all these expressions of scripture, *God is our God*—we are *his people*—he is our *portion*—we are his *heritage*—he is our *master*—we are his *servants*—he is our *king*—we are the *subjects of his kingdom*—he is our *prophet or teacher*—we are his *disciples*—with many more of the same kind. When we meet with such single and separate, they must be discussed in relation to one another, and this relation must be particularly considered. Thus, when the *kingdom* of God, or of Jesus Christ is spoken of, all things relative to this kingdom must be considered—as its laws—arms—throne—crown—subjects—extent of dominion—palace where the king resides—&c. So when our mystical *marriage* with Jesus Christ is spoken of, whether it be where he is called a bridegroom, or his church a bride; you should, after you have explained these expressions, turn your attention to relative things—as the love of Jesus Christ to us, which made him consent to this mystical marriage—the dowry, that we bring him, our sins and miseries—the communication, which he makes to us both of his name  
and

The holy scriptures are always wise and pertinent on this article. “Lord! thou hast *made* heaven and earth. . . . Stretch forth thy *hand to heal*.—Thou didst say by the mouth of *David*, The kings of the earth *stood up against* thy Christ. . . . Now Lord! behold their *threatnings*, &c. Acts iv. 24. 30—25, 26, 29. God made of one blood all nations of men . . . and now commandeth all men every

where to repent, Acts xvii. 26. 30. The God of *nature* is the God of *religion*—He *made* men, he *commands* men—he made *all* men, commands *all* men—he made all *nations* of men, he commands all men *every where*—he made all nations of *one blood*, subject to the same maladies and miseries, he commands all nations to *repent*, and so applies an universal remedy to an universal malady.

and benefits—the rest, that he grants us in his house, changing our abode—the banquet at his divine nuptials—the inviolable fidelity, which he requires of us—the right and power he acquires over us—the defence and protection, which he engages to afford us—but, when these relative things are discussed, great care must be taken neither to insist on them too much; nor to descend to mean ideas; nor even to treat of them one after another in form of a parallel: for nothing is more tiresome, than treating these apart, and one after another. They must, then, be associated together, a body composed of many images must be formed, and the whole must be always animated with the sensible, and the spiritual. I think, a preacher ought to content himself with making one single observation, or, at the most, two, in case the relative things are too numerous to be collected into one point of view. In such a case you must endeavour to reduce them to two classes: but in two different orders, and always make the difference preceptible, so that it may not be said, you have made two observations of what was naturally but one. (1)

## V. OBSERVE

(1) *Collect relative ideas into one point of view.* The direct contrary is the practice of too many, whose whole attention seems turned to the dividing, and so dissipating, losing, and, if I may speak so, gaming away the sense of the text. No preachers are so given to this method as they, who delight in an allegorical way of preaching. The damage done to religion by it is incredible. The fathers allegorized. Porphyry of old, and Woolston of late, with many others alike ill affected to the truth, took, or pretended to take, them at their word, and, by ruining their sense of a miracle, pretended to have ruined the real sense of the sacred historians, who reported the miracles of Christ; and they triumphed, as if they believed themselves. Whence came



## V.

OBSERVE WHETHER SOME THINGS BE NOT SUPPOSED, WHICH ARE NOT EXPRESSED.

This is a source of invention different from the former, for the former is confined to things really

came all these mock triumphs? Whence come they still? Most certainly from the unguarded irrelative associations of ideas of some expositors. Give one the resurrection of *Lazarus* for his subject, and he will preach concerning *regeneration*, because regeneration is *elsewhere* called a resurrection. Give him a *leper*, and he treats of a *sinner*. Give him a handful of meal, or a cruse of oil, two young pigeons, a bunch of hyssop, or a scarlet line, and you may sit down, and prepare to hear him discuss a whole body of divinity, although these articles are no other way related to his doctrine than as they serve to illustrate it.

I will subjoin an example—a reproof—and a direction.

“Ταῦτα δὲ δειγµα καὶ τυ-  
πον ἐπεχει ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ  
ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΥ· ὁ γὰρ ἡλι-  
εν τυτῶ Θεοῦ ἐστίν· ἡ δὲ σελήνη  
ἀνθρώπων· καὶ ΩΣΠΕΡ ὁ ἡλι-  
πολύ διαφέρει ὁ Θεὸς τῆς ἀν-  
θρώπου· καὶ ΚΑΘΑΠΕΡ ὁ  
ἡλι- πλῆρης παντοῦ διαµενει

μη ἐλασσων γινοµεν· ΟΥΤΩ  
παντῶς ὁ Θεὸς τελει- διαµε-  
νει πλῆρης ὡν πάσης δυναµεως  
καὶ συνεσεως καὶ σοφίας καὶ  
ἀθανασίας καὶ παντῶν τῶν· ἡ δὲ  
σελήνη κατὰ µενα φθίνει, καὶ  
δυναµει ἀποθνήσκει ἐν τυτῶ ἕσται  
ἀνθρώπων ἐπεὶ ἀναγενναί καὶ  
αὐξεί εἰς δειγµα τῆς µελλουσῆς  
ἐσεσθαι ἀναστάσεως· ΩΣΑΥ-  
ΤΩΣ καὶ αἱ τρεῖς ἡμέραι τῶν  
φωτῶν γέγονται τυποὶ εἰσιν  
τῆς τριάδος· τὰ Θεοῦ καὶ τὰ  
λοῦς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς σοφίας αὐτοῦ  
τελειῶν δὲ τυτῶ ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπων·  
Cæterum astra hæc typum  
magni mysterii præ se ferunt.  
Sol etenim Deum quodam-  
modo repræsentat, Luna ve-  
ro hominem. Ut sol multis  
(quod dicitur) parasangis an-  
tecedit lunam potentia et glo-  
ria: sic Deus plurimum ex-  
cellit hominem. Ut sol ple-  
nus semper conspicitur, nec  
unquam diminuitur: sic De-  
us perpetuo perfectus existit,  
plenus potentia, intellectu,  
sapientia, immortalitate, et  
reliquis bonis omnibus. Lu-  
na singulis mensibus occum-  
bit, ejusque potentia emori-  
tur, hominis conditionem of-  
tendans: deinde regeneratur

ly relative: but this speaks in general of things *supposed*, which have no relation to each other. For example, when we speak of a change, what they call the terminus *a quo* necessarily supposes the terminus *ad quem*: and the terminus *ad quem* supposes the terminus *a quo*. (2)

A co-

et augetur ad designandam resurrectionem cunctorum futuram. Tres dies qui præcessere creationem duorum luminarium trinitatis mysterium sacrosanctum repræsentant, viz. Deum, sermonem, sapientiam. Quartus dies typus est hominus, &c.” *Theoph. ad Autol. lib. ii.*

God the Father—God the word—God the spirit—the four first days of the creation—the sun and the moon—the quick and the dead—time and eternity! did ever an ignorant lay-brother botch together such a Joseph’s coat as this Patriarch of Antioch has done?

*Le Clerc* reproves such writers. “Certe (ethnici non exaudient) fatendum allegoricos interpretes scripturæ non immerito ab eo (i. e. Porphyrio) carpi. Neque hoc parum religioni olim nocuit, et etiamnum nocet.” *Ars Crit. tom. i. p. 2. s. i. c. 16. prope finem.*

Clement of Alexandria gives a proper word of advice.

“Παραβολὴν δὲ κυρία τις νοήσει εἰ μὴ σοφῶς καὶ ἐπισήμων καὶ ἀσάπων τὸν κύριον αὐτῆς; ἐγὼ τοίνυν πιστῶς οὐ τοιᾶνδ’, ἐγὼ δυνάμει γινώσκω ἐξείπειν, ἢ ὡς

σοφῶς ἐν διακρίσει λόγων, ἢ ὡς γοργῶς ἐν ἐρσοῖς, ἢ ὡς ἀνδρῶς. τοσαύτῳ γὰρ μάλλον ταπεινοφρονεῖν οφείλει, εἴ ποτε δοκεῖ μάλλον μείζων εἶναι ὁ Κλημὺς ἐν τῇ πρὸς Κορινθίους φησί. Parabolam autem domini quis intelliget nisi sapiens et sciens et qui diligit dominum suum? fit ergo qui talis est fidelis, fit ejusmodi ut possit explicare cognitionem, fit sapiens in verbis discernendis, fit in factis scientissimus, fit castus et mundus. Eo enim debet esse magis humilis quo videtur esse major, dicit Clemens in epistola ad Corinthios.” *Clem. Alex. Stromat. lib. vi.*

(2) *Implication differs from relation.* The chief use of this topick is *illustration*. Hypothetical elucidation and illustration are very beautiful: but hypothetical reasoning, that is to say, arguments grounded on supposition are inadmissible in a severe investigation of truth.

For example. “The Non-conformists are known by their canting notions of *indwelling*—*enlightening*—*soul-saving*—*heart-supporting*.” *Bp. Kennett’s Register and Chron. Dec. 1662.*

A covenant supposes two contracting parties—a reconciliation effected, or a peace made, supposes war and enmity—a victory supposes enemies, arms, and a combat—life supposes death, and death life—the day supposes night, and the night day — sometimes there are propositions, which necessarily suppose others, either because they are consequences, depending on their principles, or because they are truths naturally connected with others. It is always very important to understand well what things are supposed in a text;

The index gives this as a *character* of the Noncons in the reign of Charles II. The question is, how much does it prove? I believe, nothing, except the bishop's partiality.

Here are several things supposed. 1. It is a quotation from an anonymous author, yet he, who speaks from behind the curtain, fine taste, fine judice, is supposed a *credible witness*. 2. It is *supposed*, the Noncons were the *only* men, who made use of *compound* words. This is not true, for Homer made use of more words of this sort than all the Noncons put together, and the Episcopalians used them as much as the latter. 3. It is *supposed*, certain *notions* peculiar to *nonconformity* were contained in these words, and expressed by them: but neither is this true, for none of these terms express any other sentiments than what were common to

all parties at that time. 4. It is *supposed*, these words and notions were *the cant* of the party: but, without enlarging, I venture to affirm, if all these suppositions were well-grounded, and if these were the most distinguishing characters of the party, another *supposition* must be made, and such an one as would cover those Episcopalians with everlasting contempt; and that is, that they robbed, rifled, banished, imprisoned, or murdered thousands for using a few *cant words*. We do not justify the constant use of such terms as the above, and others like them, as ill-deserving—hell-deserving—God-dishonouring—heaven-daring—soul-saving—Christ-exalting—&c. but the heresy is grammatical, if they are not agreeable to the analogy of the English language. The utmost abuse of them therefore is no character of a heretical *divine*.

“ The

text; for sometimes several useful considerations may be drawn from them, and not unfrequently

“ The notion of *mixed councils*, of *clergy and laity*, in which the chiefest affairs of the *church* were transacted during the *Saxon* times, if not for some reigns after the conquest, is a *new* and unaccountable pretence, an assertion neither for the *honour* nor the *interest* of THE CHURCH.” *Archbishop Wake’s State of the Church and Clergy of England. Pref.*

Here, false principles are supposed,—that nothing is true but what makes for the honour, and interest of the *episcopal* church in England—that no historical fact can be so sunk into oblivion as to appear novel to posterity on being restored to light. An old fact may be newly discovered, the discovery may deserve a party, and yet the fact may be true, and the discovery of it worthy of praise.

“ DCCXLII. Her was mycel finoth gegaderod at Cloveshou, and thar was Athelbald Myrcna Cing, and Cutbert Arcebisceop, and scla othre wise menn. Hic congregatum est magnum concilium apud Cloveshou, *presidente* Adelbaldo Rege Merciorum, cum Cuthberto Archiepiscopo Cantuariensi, cæterisque *episcopis* simul assidentibus diligenter examnantes circa necessaria de statu totius religionis, et de

simbolo, &c.” *Arch. Wake ut sup. in Append. N<sup>o</sup>. manu propria script. penes me.*

The Latin translation of the above words supposes several things, which, although they were true, yet ought not to have been inserted here in a translation, as if asserted in the original. The translation says, king Athelbald *presided* in the synod—the text only says he *was thar*. The translation says Cuthbert was Archbishop of *Canterbury*—the text only says Cutbert was *Arcebisceop*. The translation says the synod was made up of the king, the archbishop, and other *bishops*—the text says other *wise men*. The two first of these suppositions are of no consequence, and I only observe, that in strict reasoning they need not be allowed as the sense of the *text*. The last is an article of some consequence, and I would by no means allow it; for as on the one hand, it is not supposable all the reputed *wisdom* of the nation centered in the bishops, so on the other it is certain the laity as well as the clergy subscribed and authenticated all legal deeds.

When we say arguments grounded on supposition ought not to be admitted in reasoning, we mean *groundless, unnecessary, illogical, uncertain* supposition. Where  
M 2 position



quently the very expressions in the text include them. (3)

For

position is natural, necessary, probable, or certain, the supposition will become a *datum*, and a preacher will be allowed to deduce arguments *similar* to his *datum*. A probable supposition affords a probable argument, a necessary supposition affords a demonstration. Our next note will explain our meaning.

(3) *Some propositions necessarily suppose others.* The Justinian code of canon law anathematizes Eunomians, who baptized by single immersion *εις μίαν κατάβυσον βαπτίζουσιν*. This canon has the force of authentick history, and we are obliged to suppose, that some christians in the year 383, in which year the canon was made at Constantinople, did actually administer baptism by *immersion*, and by *single immersion*. *Cod. Can. Justin. Christoph. Justel. edit. Gebhard. Theodor Meiers. Can. clxx.*

The same council decreed that Arians, Novatians, Sabatarians, and other heretics should be restored to church-communion, on condition of their abjuring all heresies, and delivering up all their books, which were not agreeable to the received notions of the holy catholic and apostolick church. Here again we must necessarily

suppose—that some christians judged for themselves in matters of religion—that they wrote and published books against the general popular creeds—and that the pretended apostolick church imposed terms of communion different from those of scripture, making their own creeds, and not the sacred scriptures, rules of orthodoxy. *Can. clxx.*

So again, the council at Laodicea, held in the year 364, decreed that no psalms of private composition, *ιδιωτικῶν ψαλμῶν*, should be used in the church. This implies, that some churches did use psalms or hymns of private composition in public divine worship. *Can. clxiii.*

“ Titus Aristo was an eminent lawyer, Pliny says, *Nihil est illo gravius, sanctius, doctius, ut mihi non unus homo: sed litteræ ipsæ, omnesque bonæ artes, in uno homine summum periculum facere videantur. Quam peritus ille et privati juris et publici? quantum rerum? quantum exemplorum? quantum antiquitatis tenet? nihil est quod discere velis, quod ille docere non possit: Quid est quod non statim sciat? et tamen plerumque hæsitat. Dubitat diversitate rationum, quas acri magnoque judicio*

For example. Rom. xii. 17. *Recompence to no man evil for evil.* In discussing this text you may very

ab origine, causisque repetit, discernit, expendit. . . . *Ornat hæc magnitudo animi, quæ nihil ad ostentationem, omnia ad conscientiam refert, recteque facti non ex populi sermone mercedem, sed ex facto petit.*" *Vitæ J.c.torum a Gul Grotio. J.c.to Delp. lib. ii. cap. 3.*

In this character of Aristo, it is *supposed* as a datum, or taken for granted, that it is an excellence in an investigator of truth to pause, to doubt, to examine, to *form his judgment coolly* and cautiously—that it argues *magnanimity* to judge according to evidence, and not to be swayed by popular notions and vulgar applause. Who will deny these data? A reasoner may safely build on them.

All our divines observe, that there is a singular propriety in the answers, which our Lord gave the various sects among the Jews, that came to him with their questions, in this point of light. He *supposed* certain data, which each party held, and replied accordingly. Most divines allow only *three* principal sects among the Jews at Christ's advent: but Triglandius, professor of divinity, and of Jewish antiquities, has, I think, clearly proved the existence of a

*fourth*, denominated *Karaites*, that is, *Scripturists*, because they rejected traditions, and received the holy scriptures, as consistent protestants do now, as the *sole* and *sufficient* rule of faith and practice. "Frequens et obvia in scriptis eruditorum mentio est sectæ cujusdam vetustioris inter Judæos, quæ aliena prorsus ab humanis in religione divina institutis, inimica Talmudi, atque traditionibus magistrorum, *soli* scripturæ opibus ac revelatione contenta, appellationem hinc meruit KARÆORUM. Epitheton קראים impositum initio fuisse ad contemptum, quomodo sub repurgatæ religionis tempus nostros *Biblistas, Evangelicos*, aut simili titulo salutabant, διασυνήκως.

Our professor thinks, these were the people called SCRIBES — LAWYERS, in the New Testament, that is to say, people, who made the *written* scriptures their rule, in distinction from the *Pharisees*, who held *traditions* as of equal authority with the sacred writings. By embracing *all* the Old Testament they were distinguished from the *Sadducees*, who held *only the books of Moses*, as of divine authority. And they were distinguished from the *Essenes*  
by

very properly observe the truths, which are *implied*, or supposed in the words. As 1st. The  
*disorder*

by inhabiting *towns and cities*, and by holding preferments, in common with the rest of their countrymen, while the Essenes, it is well known dwelt in tents remote from publick places. These *scripturists* are distinguished from the Pharisees, In so saying thou reproachest *us also*. Luke xi. 45. Acts xxiii. 9. *The scribes that were of the Pharisees part, arose, &c.* that is, the Scripturists took that side, which the Pharisees took in St. Paul's controversy. Our Lord is supposed to praise some of these men, who practised what they taught, Matt. xxiii. 34. xiii. 52. And to reprove others, who sacrificed the profession of their own principles to their sinful secular love of those riches, titles, and honours, which the court-party, the Pharisees had to bestow. Mat. xxiii. 2. Luke xi. 45, &c.

This excellent piece of sacred criticism elucidates many passages of scripture, and places the propriety of many expressions of our Lord in a beautiful point of light, all on the principle, with which we began this note, *supposing* propositions, and taking them up as data. *Jacob. Triglandii Diatribe de Secta Karaorum.*

It is the height of injudi-

cioufness to set out with a supposition *not allowed*. For example. A pious writer published a piece 1691, entitled "*The truth, which God hath shewn unto his servant Richard Stafford.*" Here, it should seem, the reader is to suppose—that holy scripture is *imperfect*—and that christians need new revelations, and have them—but these are not to be supposed, and consequently Richard Stafford's discoveries are for his own amusement.

Thus another entitles his book "*An Essay against Arianism and some other HERESIES.*" Here that is *supposed*, which is actually to be proved, that *Arianism* is a heresy. If there be such a thing as *moral* heresy, the *railer* is the heretick. *Maittaire against Whiston, 1711.*

That inimitable christian, Dr. Gauden, whose "soul was perfectly possessed with horror at the death of king Charles I. wrote a Steliteutick, Feb. 10, 1648, in an extacy of sighs, tears, and indignation, signally marked with sad drops of his passionate heart, on an occasion in which no ink could be black enough, or have too much salt, vinegar, gall or aqua-fortis in it; and thirteen years after, even in

*disorder* into which sin has thrown mankind, so that men are exposed to receive injuries and insults from each other. A society of sinners is only a shadow of society, they are actually at war with each other, and, like the Midianitish army, turning every one his sword against his companion. The spirit of the world is a spirit of dispersion rather than of association. Different interests, diversities of sentiments, varieties of opinions, contrarieties of passions make a perpetual division, and the fruits of this division are insults and injuries. It may be said of each in such societies, as of Ishmael in the prophecy, *his hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him.*

2. We must not imagine that faith, and the dignity of a christian calling raise the *disciple of Christ* above injuries: on the contrary, they expose him oftener to evils than others; as well because God himself will have our faith tried, that we may arrive (as the scripture speaks.) at heaven *through many tribulations*; as because a christian profession necessarily divides believers from infidels.

The

1661, finding it to have something in it of a confused rapture, not misbecoming so intensive a grief, and so pious impatience, was persuaded by his printer to publish it as his legitimate issue, and was content that his name should be called upon it, intending by it to prove, that the man, the christian, the king, the saint, the martyr, whom Judasses betrayed, whom Jews destroyed, whom cannibals devoured, had beams of divine majesty in him,

which daily conquered all eclipsings, that either his own misfortunes, or their malice cast upon him — and farther, that the sin of beheading king Charles questionless exceeded in many respects that of Christ's crucifiers." Now in all this, tyro, what is *supposed*? what? thou simpleton! why, that eminence of learning, sincerity, and piety qualified the dean of Bocking for the bishoprick of Exeter! *Pudet hæc opprobria dici!*



The world and sin form a kind of communion between the wicked and worldly, which produces a mutual forbearance and friendship : but there is no communion between a believer and an unbeliever any more than between light and darkness, Christ and Belial. Thence come all the persecutions of the church, and thence will good men continue to meet with opposition from the wicked to the end of time. Jesus Christ, when he sent his apostles, did not fail to apprise them of this ; he said, *I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves* ; and again, *If ye were of the world the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

You may make an observation on each of these supposed truths, and, having established the apostle's precept by shewing that private revenge is contrary to the laws of christianity, and incompatible with true piety, you may observe a third supposed truth.

That the gospel not only forbids resentment and revenge : it even commands us to *pardon* offences ; and, farther, obligeth us to *do good* to our enemies, and to *pray* for our persecutors, according to the precept of Jesus Christ, *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them, that despitefully use you* : and, according to the doctrine of St. Paul in another place, *If thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst give him drink.*

It remains that you take care in treating supposed truths, 1st, not to *fetch* them too far, and to bring them about by long circuits of reasoning. Avoid this for two reasons ; first, because you would render your discourse *obscure* by it ; for every body is not capable of seeing truths, which are very distant from the text : and, secondly, because by this means you might bring in *all* the whole

whole body of divinity into your text, which attempt would be vicious, and contrary to the rules of good sense. (4) Of supposed truths, you must choose the most *natural*, and those, which lie nearest the text. (5)

In

(4) *Far-fetched suppositions obscure a subject.* See page 17, n. 5. A foreign writer takes up this question, “An damnato forte et exuto principe, cujus hereditarium est regnum, primogenitus ab adundo, principatu ullo jure possit arceri?” He affirms the negative, and sets about proving it by declaring—that the fifth commandment said, *honour thy father*, and that he had been taught from his infancy to consider *princes* as parents—that *Tacitus* declared a republick was one *body*, and must be governed by one *soul*—that although princes sin, as *Noah* did, yet he would be blessed, who, like *Shem*, covered his father’s *nakedness*—that the author of *Ecclesiasticus*, and *S. Gregory the Great*, had both given good counsel to subjects to continue to reverence vicious magistrates—and moreover, that many christian fathers and councils had delivered holy sentences and decrees on the unalienable dignity of kings.” Our logician introduceth this with, “*Itane, Regicida? Arrige aures, Anonyme?*” . . . *Arrige aures indeed!* —*Marc.*

VOL. II.

*Zuer. Boxhornii de Majestate, et Prærogativa regum.* 1649.

This piece was written in favour of the cruel arbitrary house of Stuart. Our illustrious senators at the Revolution went a nearer way to work. They said, *Salus populi est suprema lex. Vox populi vox Dei.* The nineteenth of *Ezekiel* was their text, and the act of settlement was their just exposition of it. The Stuarts, like lions, had learned to catch prey, and to devour men; but the nation spread their net over them, put them in ward, and sent them to *Babylon*, that their voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of *Israel*. Thence all the happiness, that this nation has since enjoyed under the gentle government of princes, who deserve to be for ever revered as true *pætres patriæ*, reigning not in the sophisms of hirelings: but in the just affections of their subjects.

(5) *Choose natural supposed truths.* Thus bishop *Flechier*, in a sermon concerning the rich man, who said, *I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I be-*

N

*store*

In the second place, do not *enlarge* on im-  
plied

*show all my goods ; and I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years : take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. . . . .*

“ The rich man does not propose to employ his fortune in *faction*. . . . He does not intend to increase his estate by incroaching on his neighbours—nor to get richer by extortion and *usury*—he does not mean to trouble and persecute good people, who do not live as he doth—nor does he design to give himself up to a fordid *avarice*—or to ostentation and *pomp*—only *soul take thine ease*.”

The Lord seems to describe an Epicurean in the text, and, though he does not express all, that the preacher observes, yet nobody, the least attentive, can doubt the implication of it. *Flech. ser. sur l'Oblig. del' Aumone, tom. ii.*

If the following tale be true, a most unnatural supposition is contained in it. “ Bishop Smallbroke was said by Woolston to have taken occasion, in explaining the miracle of the devils sent by Christ into the herd of swine, to mention the *numbers* of each, wherein the number of swine being found to be one more than that of the devils, it was observed that some two of the swine could have but one devil, which consequently must be

divided into two halves, upon which his lordship was unluckily nicknamed, *Bishop Split-devil*. *Biograph. Brit. Art. Woolston. Rem. P.*

*Unnatural suppositions.* Some divines have dealt in *these things of dishonesty* in an open, barefaced way, others in a method close and covert : but they only commend themselves to men's consciences in the sight of God, who, renouncing these inuendoes, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, make the TRUTH manifest. 2 Cor. iv. 2. Dr. Daniel Featly published a violent, false, abusive piece against the Baptists, whom he mortally hated, and at the beginning of the book a plate representative of the people, against whom he wrote, performing the ordinance of baptism. Ministers the administrators, and both men and women the receivers of baptism, are represented as stark naked in a river, and the ministers are thrusting the people's heads down forward into the water. Such a sight had never been seen since the world began, and if Dr. Featly *supposed*, the baptists administered the ordinance so, we are obliged to *suppose*, he knew nothing about the matter.

Another of these tricksters  
wrote



plied truths; it is proper, indeed, that hearers should

wrote in 1647, and published in 1681 (another *prudent* Dr. Gauden) a piece of sixteen quarto pages, entitled *The Assembly Man*, with design to vilify the assembly of divines, who were most of them past answering before the book was published. Here is a plate of an *Assembly Man*. Under his feet lie four volumes, called *Common Prayer, Casuists, Councils, Fathers*—In his hand are the two ends of a rope, called *jure divino*, which runs through the loops of five large bags, in the first of which is *4s. per diem*—in the second *lecture*—in the third *sequestered benefices*—in the fourth *citizens good wives*—in the fifth *interest money*. On the table lies a bundle, called *articles against delinquents*—and over his head on a shelf lie four volumes, entitled *Directory—Concordance—Geneva notes—Ordinances, votes, journals*. A great many unnatural suppositions are here made; we do not wonder at a buffoon for making them: but we are surprized to see grave historians and divines pretending to derive true intelligence from them. They ought to know the merits of a cause, and (to use the language of one of that age.) to “ execrate the book for the sake of the rascal in the title-page.” *Sir John Berkenhead. Assembly Man.*

A German physician of the last century endeavoured, in two large folios, to expose unnatural suppositions by jocular contrast, and to destroy vice by affecting to cherish it. He makes a Christopher Hegendorph speak an oration to the university of Leipsick in praise of drunkenness—“ Doubtless, illustrious auditors! as I am a young man, and about to recommend drunkenness to grave sober men, I shall seem to be double drunk—but pardon me if I affirm, I am not the first patron of drunkenness—Intoxication is an ancient universal practice, Jews, Trojans, and Greeks got drunk. Noah and Lot got drunk—The Greeks published encomiums on intoxication—The Romans loved tipling. Tiberius and Lucius Piso used to sit at their cups three days and nights together—Egyptians, Saxons, and almost all people got drunk—As for the Monks, they could not possibly go through the hard services of their several orders without plenty of liquor—Beside, liquor makes mirth, and mirth is life—Drinking also sets men a talking about religion, and our farmers never dispute so clearly for Luther against Eccius as when they are animated with strong liquor—



should know them: but they are not principal articles. (6)

Poets and preachers can do nothing without plenty of drink, and with it what can they not do!—But, you will object, Christ says, *Be not overcharged with drunkenness.* Luke xxi. 34. Observe, he does not say, *Be not drunk*, but *Be not overcharged with drunkenness.* Can't you get *drunk* without getting *dead drunk*?—But St. Paul says, *Be not drunk with wine where-in is excess!* Eph. v. 18. True. But observe, St. Paul does not say, *Do not get drunk*, he only says, *Don't get excessively drunk!*" &c. I trust I shall be forgiven for this transcript, when it is remembered, that I insert this instead of the grave reveries of some modern divines, whose sermons and systems actually suppose articles as illogical, unscriptural, and unnatural as these. *Amphitheat. Sapient. Socraticæ Joco-eriæ. Cass. Dornavii. tom. ii. Hegendorphini Declam.*

(6) *Do not enlarge on implied truths.* That is to say, whether you speak briefly or diffusively on implied articles, do not lay any great stress on them, they should rather adorn than support your reasoning. A single epithet properly placed may contain weighty argument; and, on the contrary, no wordy coverings of a supposition can turn probable im-

plication into clear demonstration. "Epithets, says one, must be varied according to a subject. In soliciting a king for an office, or in thanking him for a nomination, it would be absurd to begin an address to him with, *most powerful and invincible prince*; it should run *most bountiful and munificent.* Ignoscas primo errori dux *mitissime*—Patere te exorari *clementissime* Cæsar—Turcarum vim a christianorum humeris depelle Rex *invicte.* Restitue per calumniam oppressum *æquissime* Judex—In bonam partem accipias vir *humanissime*—Non meum est tibi consilium impertiri vir *prudentissime.* In hujusmodi orationis genere non sunt speciosa epitheta: sed argumenti pondus obtinent. *Johan. Despauterii Com. Gram. De Epithet. 1537.*

The transforming of Epithets into substantives, which the last-quoted writer recommends, was very fashionable, when he wrote: but, except in a very few instances, it is out of vogue now—*Most dread*, that is dreadful *sovereign*—an address fit for Pluto, and an affront to a British prince. I commit myself to your *fatherhood*—I congratulate your *fortitude*—I beseech your *reverence*—My folly submits to the wisdom of your *grace.* These are neither

And thirdly, take care also that these supposed things be *important*, either for instruction in general, or for casting light particularly on the text, or for consolation, or for the correction of vice, or practice of piety, or some useful purpose, otherwise

ther rhyme nor reason now. If no great stress should be laid on probable suppositions, what sensible man would lay any stress on improbable ones? It is curious to trace the doctrine of improbability, and to observe, all stand as it is, what ponderous edifices have been erected on it. The papal infallibility—the doctrine of transubstantiation—the divine right of anglican episcopacy—and the divine right of kings over the religion of their subjects—were never proved, nor ever can be made to appear again even probable: but what wondrous things have been said, and what wondrous actions have been done on supposition that they were true? The two following anecdotes will exemplify this article.

When the bible was last translated into English, James I. as head of the church, appointed translators, and gave them certain rules of translation. One of these was, “you shall retain the old ECCLESIASTICAL words, not changing the word church for congregation,” and so on. Something is here *supposed*, either that an unbiassed translation would endanger the hierarchy, or that

the oracles of God were given to serve the views of a party. Regal influence is too plain to be denied. Were it possible to suppose that the dedication of this translation to his majesty was written by the translators, we should soon find out how they understood the rule; for the spirit of the dedication was imbibed far from seats of learning, and somewhere near the throne!

In 1538, Henry VIII. wrote a letter to his bishops directing them how to instruct the people. “First, we strictly charge and command you, that plainly and distinctly, without any additions, ye shall every holyday, wheresoever ye shall be within your diocese, when ye may so do with your health and convenient commodity, openly in your cathedral church, or the parish church of the place where ye shall for time be, read and declare OUR ARTICLES; and in no wise, in the rest of your words which ye shall then speak of yourself, if you speak any thing, utter any word that shall make the same, or any word in the same *doubtful* to the people.” *Bp. Burnet's Hist. Ref. vol. i. Addenda. p. 361. 2d Ed.*

wife you would deliver trifling impertinencies under the name of implied truths. (7)

## VI.

### REFLECT ON THE PERSON SPEAKING OR ACTING. (8)

For an example, let us take the last mentioned text of St. Paul, *recompense to no man evil for evil.*  
Here

(7) *Impertinencies for implications.* Tertullian begins his book on baptism thus. "Fœlix sacramentum aquæ nostræ quia ablutis delictis pristinæ cæcitatæ in vitam æternam liberamur. Non erit otiosum digestum istud, instruens tam eos qui cum maxime formantur, quam et illos qui simpliciter credidisse contenti, non exploratis rationibus traditionum intentatam probabilem fidem per imperitiam portant: atque adeo nuper conversata istic quædam de Caiana hæresi vipera venenatissima doctrina sua plerosque rapuit, imprimis baptismum destruens plane secundum naturam: nam feræ viperæ, et aspides, ipsique reguli serpentis arida et inaquosa sectantur. Sed nos pisciculi secundum *Ἰησοῦν* nostrum Iesum Christum in aqua nascimur, nec aliter quam in aqua permanendo salvi sumus." Upon this passage his learned editor gives us this explanatory note, "*Sed nos pisciculi secundum Ἰησοῦν nostrum, facit*

ad intellectum hujus loci B. Optatus Afer. lib. 3. adv. Parmenian (uti etiam ante me adnotarunt Latinus et Franciscus Baldvinus) Hic (de Christo loquens inquit) est *piscis*, qui in baptismo per invocationem fontalibus undis inseritur, ut quæ aqua fuerat, a *pisce* etiam piscina vocitetur. Cujus *piscis* nomen secundum appellationem Græcam, in uno nomine per singulas literas turbam sanctorum nominum continet. *Ἰηδς* enim (sic lego) Latine est Iesus, Christus, Dei filius, salvator. Quod ipsum repetit B. August. l. 18, de civit. dei, cap. 23. voces autem græcæ, quæ singulis vocis *Ἰηδς* literis indicantur, hæ sunt, *ἰησὺς χριστὸς θεοῦ υἱὸς σωτὴρ.*"

Who would have thought that *baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the holy ghost* implied all this? *Tertull. tom. iii. de baptismo. cap. 1.*

(8) *Reflect on the person speaking.* Erasmus enlarges on this article, which includes—family



Here you may very pertinently remark, that this precept is more beautiful in the mouth of *St. Paul*,  
than

mily—country—sex—age—education—body, as beautiful or deformed, strong or weak—fortune—condition—mental abilities—particular studies—connections—conduct—name—&c. “*Profue-rit igitur quid cuique personæ proprium sit, et quid quæquæ res efficiat in primis habere cognitum. ad utrumque conducet comicorum et historicorum lectio, philosophiæ cognitio, et rerum plurimarum experientia. Et hi loci vocantur rhetoribus, &c.*”  
*De ratione concionandi, lib. II.*

**FAMILY.** John viii. 37. *I know that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me—39. If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham—40. Ye seek to kill a man, that hath told you the truth, this did not Abraham—42. If God were your father, ye would love me—44. Ye are of your father the devil.*

**COUNTRY.** Deut. iv. 7. *What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them?—8. What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous?—Col. iii. 11. In the new man, there is neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all—Phil. ii. 15. Be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God, without rebuke, in the*

*midst of a crook'd and perverse nation.*

**SEX.** Gal. iii. 27, 28. *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

**AGE.** Titus ii. 2. *Aged men must be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.—3. Aged women must be teachers of good things—5. Young women must be discreet, chaste, keepers at home—6. Young men must be sober-minded—1 Pet. v. 5. Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder—1 Tim. iv. 12. Let no man despise thy youth.*

It would be easy to enlarge this list by assorting texts with topicks: but it may be more useful to observe that each article is subject to **USE** and **ABUSE**, that is to say, arguments drawn from *person* are sometimes proper, and in some cases absurd.

For example of use.

Monsieur Saurin takes this topick in a Sermon on our Lord's prayer on the cross for his executioners. Luke xxiii. 34. *Father forgive them; for they know not what they do.* “The first pretext, with which you colour your hatred and vengeance, is the Dignity of the *offended*, and the littleness of the *offender*. I am the



than it could have been in that of any other man. The reason is this, he of all the men in the world had

the offended person! I who am a person of distinction! I who have such an equipage! I who possess a very large estate! I who have such an extensive influence! I who have so many pompous titles! I am the offended person!—but, when we come to examine this **SUPERB** I, we frequently find, it is nothing at all; it is a man, who is only dust and ashes hoisting his haughty head in the world on account of the good fortune of a few days, and who by a lucky chance (or rather by an adorable providence, which often puts even scepters into hands the most unworthy to hold them, to shew us how little we ought to account of all the earth calls glorious.) this creature by caprice lives in a great house, though a few years ago his ancestors begged their bread. Well!—**YOU** are offended! **YOU GRAND!** **YOU SUPERB!** **YOU ILLUSTRIOUS!** You are offended! One of these inferior *men*, or rather in your account one of these contemptible *insects*, on which you have the condescension to tread, has rashly presumed to look in your face, yea even to oppose an insolent obstacle against your supreme will! this is the first pretext of insensible pride big with revenge. But this must not

only be proposed before this pulpit, it must be stated on Calvary, in the presence of that Jesus, whom we just now heard saying, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do.* Who is this pardoning Jesus? who are the *men* whom he pardons, and whom he prays his father to pardon? This Jesus is the *first-born of every creature*, it is he, whom God hath made both *Lord and Christ*, it is he, in whose presence *every knee must bow.* And who are these whom he pardons, and for whom he prays? they are men, it is needless to employ any other words or images to express all that is little and mean; yet all this real dignity on one part, and all imaginable meanness on the other did not appear to Jesus Christ sufficient reasons for withholding his love, his ideas of magnanimity were altogether different from yours." &c. *Sermon tom. i. sur la priere de Jesus Christ pour ses bourreaux.*

Example of abuse.

There was a book published in the reign of Charles II. by a Mr. Fowler, entitled *The Design of Christianity*. This book was thought by many divines to confound the doctrine of justification with that of sanctification, and so to render the attonement of Christ useless. John Bunyan wrote

had the greatest reason for resentment upon worldly principles; for never was there a man more persecuted, never a man more unjustly persecuted than

wrote against the book, and, among other things, said, "the ministers of the church of England are a gang of rabbling counterfeited clergy, who like apes blow up the glory of trumpery, and cover the filthy parts with their tails." This was committing THE UNPARDONABLE SIN, and a nameless priest, not considering how twelve years and six months imprisonment, with various other cruel persecutions had chagrined and soured the good man, published by way of answer, a quarto of 78 pages, entitled "Dirt wip't off—or, A manifest discovery of the gross ignorance, erroneousness, and most unchristian and wicked spirit of one John Bunyan, Lay-preacher, in Bedford, which he hath shewed in a vile pamphlet publish't by him against the design of Christianity. - - - 2 Pet. ii. 12. *These as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed* (or to catch and corrupt) speak evil of the things that they understand not."

The priest apologizes in the preface for "his condescending to defile *his* fingers with so very dirty a creature as this John Bunyan." However as he had "been near 20

years or longer, most infamous in the town and county of Bedford, for a very pestilent schismatick, he appealed to authority whether this brutish, black-mouthed Rabbshakehought to enjoy any interest in his majesty's toleration, and whether the letting such firebands as fall upon the *ministers*, the discipline, and rites establish't, such most impudent malicious schismaticks go unpunish't doth not tend to the subversion of *all* government." The modest priest, having transferred work too dirty for himself to his most sacred majesty, his dread sovereign Lord king Charles; and having got behind the throne, claps his hands and defies, John "Do thy worst, thou fierce and fiery Bedlam. Persist in treasuring up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

All through the book, Devil and Damnation, two bound-bailiffs retained to serve *the church*, are out after *one* John Bunyan. At length they seize him, and bring him before his sovereign lord the priest, who thus *condescends* to say to him. "Mr. Fowler says, that Cal-

than he; he was persecuted by his own countrymen the Jews, persecuted by the gentiles, persecuted by false brethren, persecuted by false apostles, persecuted when he preached the gospel, persecuted even by those, for whose salvation he was labouring, persecuted to prison, to banishment, to bonds, to blood; how amiable then is such a precept in the mouth of such a man! (9)

How

vin, Peter Martyr, Musculus, Zanchy, and others did not question, but that God could have pardoned sin, without any other satisfaction than the repentance of the sinner. "It matters not," replies John, "I have neither made my creed out of them, nor any other than the holy scriptures." What John! rejoined the priest, "because you have not made *your* creed out of them, do the judgment of so many men famous for learning and godliness signifye nothing with you! This is like a saying of your *own*, that is, of one composed of pride and ignorance! how came such a piece of nothing as *thou* art to be so highly conceited of thine *own* judgment! out of the scriptures! who are best accomplished't for the understanding of them? the learned or ideots!"

I was going a while ago to apologize for the *tails* of John's apes: but it is needless, for some apes have long tails, I see. Calvin, Zanchy, and OTHERS said so and so.

Very well. What then? Why then I, the parish priest, I ape these great men, and chatter after them! Very well. What then? Why then you, John Bunyan, you very dirty creature, you fierce and fiery bedlam, you pestilent infamous schismatical layman, you must say after me, as I do after others! No, says John, this would buckle a tail of consequence on the posteriors of an ape!

(9) *How amiable are exhortations to patience in the mouth of a persecuted man!* The beauty of a great number of passages of scripture is highly set off by reflecting on the *persons*, whose words they are. Thus,—*All is vanity, and vexation of spirit.* Eccl. ii. 11. Who says so, a monk? No, I, the wisest, the richest, and the most industrious prince in the world, I, who had genius to invent, fortune to purchase, and industry to execute, I, who *built houses, planted vineyards,* and so on, I declare all the world is *vanity* in itself, and

*vexat*



How forcible is such a precept supported by one of the greatest examples we can conceive! by the example of a man whose interest seems to dictate a quite contrary practice! When we give such precepts to the worldly, they never fail to say to us, Yes, yes! you talk finely! you have never been insulted as we have! had you met with what we have you would talk otherwise! But there is no reason to say so to St. Paul, any more than to Jesus Christ, his master, the author of this divine morality; for who was ever so persecuted as Jesus Christ?

vexation to him, who places his felicity in it.

Prov. xxi. *It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top than with a brawling woman in a wide house.* Who says so, a fellow of a college? No, a prince, whose seraglio contained a thousand women. 1 Kings xi. 3.

Exod. v. *Moses told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord.* Who presumes to give language to God? A man to whom the Lord had spoken, iv. 1. &c. and a man empowered to prove his mission by miracles, iv. 30. *He gathered the elders—spoke the words—and did the signs.*

Job xxxvii. 23. *We cannot find the Almighty out.* The uttering of this expression would be a disgrace to those, who never study: but how beautiful in the mouth of a man of soul, and of soul inspired too! See Job xxxii. 8.

2 Cor. xii. 10. *I take plea-*

*sure in persecutions.* Who are you, a rich, reputable, beneficed gentleman? No, I, who have been beaten with rods—I, who have five times received forty stripes, save one, I glory in being persecuted. 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

2 Cor. xii. 11. *I ought to be commended of you—I who gladly spend, and am spent for you,* ver. 15.

Solomon refers to this to-pick, when he says, *Excellent speech becometh not a fool, much less do lying lips a prince.* Prov. xvii. 7.—And Nehemiah acted on it, when he said, *Should such a man as I flee? Who is there that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life?* Neh. vi. 11.—So Christ spoke to Saul, Acts ix. 4. *Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?*—So the patriarch to his brethren. Gen. xlv. 3. *I am Joseph!*



Christ? and after him who suffered more than his servant St. Paul? (1)

2. You may also very properly remark, that to take a different view of the apostle Paul, no man was more obliged to teach and love such a morality than *himself*. Why? Because of all those, whom God in his ineffable mercy had called to the

(1) *Who suffered more than St. Paul?* Persecution has generally been on the profane side, and piety on that of sufferers. An excellent foreign divine takes occasion from St. Paul's inflicting blindness on Elymas, Acts xiii. to enquire whether persons called hereticks ought to be punished by ministers of the gospel, and civil magistrates. "No, says he, they may not—for their errors may be involuntary—erroneous opinions may be held by men of upright lives—If they cannot believe some doctrines, it is because they cannot harmonize them with their own ideas, and if they cannot be persuaded to profess they do believe them, while they do not believe them, it is because they cannot persuade themselves to tell a lie—Men, who dare not disguise their sentiments, deserve praise for their sincerity rather than blame for their zeal—The first defenders of christianity forbore to persecute, pleaded for liberty, and promoted religion by persuasion—Tertullian says,

Religion is a work of choice, it cannot be forced, nothing is more opposite to it than force. (*Sponte suscipi debeat, non vi, &c. ad Scap. cap. 2.*) Lactantius, and Augustine in his wisest days, spoke the same language—But why quote the fathers? A greater master, Jesus Christ decides the controversy. He even left his own apostles at liberty, *Will ye also go away?* John vi. 67.—He did more, he laid before them the sufferings, that they must endure if they espoused his cause, *If any man will come after me, he must take up his cross.* Mat. xvi. 24. Consider each of you, if you will go back, you may—If you follow me, it must be by choice—It would degrade the gospel to use force to support it, by such a conduct religion would seem to be destitute of sufficient reason and argument, and this would put it on a level with error and vice." *Discour. de Monsieur du Beausobre. Past. de l'Eglise, Franc. de Berlin. Disc. xxxii. Elymas.*

(2) *Saul!*

the knowledge of the truth, he had been the most concerned in cruel efforts of rage against God and his church; all inflamed with fury he went from Jerusalem to Damascus to ravage the flock of Jesus Christ. In this raging violence of his hatred, God made him feel his love, pardoned his sins, softened his heart, and from heaven cried to him *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* (2) Who then

(2) *Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?* This is, assuredly, one of the finest expressions, that ever fell from the mouth of man. There is a similar passage in Micah vi. 3. *O my people! What have I done unto thee? Wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me—What have I not done for thee? I brought thee out of the land of Egypt—I sent before thee Moses and Aaron—Remember now what Balak asked—and what Balaam answered,* ver. 4, 5. Our divines are greatly divided concerning the circumstances attending St. Paul's conversion. The most probable account is thus stated by the judicious writer last quoted.—The converted Jews, being persecuted at Jerusalem, some of them fled to Damascus, the capital of Syria, about ten or twelve miles from Jerusalem (some say seventy).—Aretas reigned in Damascus, and allowed the Jewish high-priest at Jerusalem to exercise his jurisdiction in religious matters over the Jews who dwelt in

his city—Thither, properly authorized, Saul was going on the priests persecuting business—near the city he and all his company heard several thunder-claps, attended with several flashes of lightning—one of these struck Saul blind, and he fell flat on the ground, his face being toward the earth—In this state he lay, and had a heavenly vision, Acts xxvi. 19. He was in an ecstasy, and forgetting for a while his body and sensible objects held a converse with Jesus Christ—none of his companions heard any other sounds than those of thunder, Acts xxii. 9.—This idea does not diminish the evidence of the miracle—for Jesus discovered his knowledge of Saul's heart—Ananias had a similar vision—Saul had full instructions given him—miraculous powers were imparted to him—The apostle's own full conviction, confirmed by all his subsequent conduct—all these prove the reality of his miraculous conversion—God gave the law

then could be more obliged to preach mercy than this man, to whom God had shewed so much mercy? Might he not say, when he gave these rules of morality, what he said on another subject, *I have received of the Lord that which I deliver unto you*, I have received the same mercy, which I teach you. Add to this, the apostle had not only met with pardoning love to an enemy on God's part, but he had also experienced it from the *church*. Far from rendering him evil for evil, far from avenging his persecutions, the disciples of Christ reached out the arms of their love to him, received him into their communion, and numbered him with the apostles of Jesus Christ.

## VII.

### REFLECT ON THE STATE OF THE PERSON SPEAKING OR ACTING.

Thus in explaining 1 Theff. v. 16. *Rejoice evermore*, you must not fail to consider the state of St. Paul, when he wrote that epistle; for he was at Athens, (3) engaged in that superstitious city, where, as it is said in the xvii. of Acts, his spirit was *stirred in him*, observing *the city wholly given to idolatry*; where he was treated as a *babler*, a *setter forth of strange Gods*, and where, in short, he was the object

to the Jews by Moses in thunder and lightning, a voice of words, and ensigns of glory, and so he gave the gospel to the Gentiles by Paul." *Beausobre Disc. xxx. Conv. de S. Paul.*

(3) *St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians from Athens.*

Most learned men think, this epistle was written at Corinth, whither the apostle went when he left Athens; this, say they, was in the twelfth year of Claudius, and the fifty-second of the Christian æra; this was the first-written of all his epistles.

(4) *Athens*

object of Athenian ridicule and raillery. (4) Yet, amid so many just causes of grief, he exhorts the  
Thef-

(4) *Athens exhibited many just causes of grief.* What lover of morality, what servant of God, can help grieving at seeing the wretched state of this, the first city in the heathen world? Bad as we are, we are not equal to it. The idolatry, and immorality of Athens have left an everlasting mark of imbecility on mere natural religion, however cultivated and improved it may be. Athens, the seat of all polite literature; Athens, the tutor of so many famous historians, philosophers, and poets; Athens, where one would have enquired as at the oracle of God; Athens, says Pausanias, had more Gods, than all Greece beside! Athens celebrated the feasts of Bacchus, at which, says Plato, I have seen the whole city drunk! At Athens, the mysteries of Eleusis were a part of religion! “Quum Ceres

in pagum Atticæ Eleusinem venit, amissam filiam mœrens, et simul quærens, puerum Iacchum secum ducebat. Eidem tristitia, labore et siti confectæ Baubo anus Eleusinii pagi indigena, potionem obtulit, quam Græci vocant cyceonem. Sed cum induci non posset ad bibendum, Baubo res illi suas, quibus fæminæ sunt, subductis vestibus ostendere cœpit. Puer Iacchus, qui cum matre Cerere ibidem erat, visis pudendis Baubonis, manum admovit, et blande ea succutere, ac contrectare auspicatus est. Quæ res Cererem ad risum compulit, ita ut cyceonem mœrore paululum inde remisso ebiberit. Hic est sensus Græcorum *Orphei* versus, quos citat *Clemens*, [*Clem. Alex. vult in admon. ad gentes.*] in quibus exponendis et corrigendis frustra hactenus omnis doctorum natio tentavit.

Ὡς εἰπούσα πεπλους ἀνεστυραλο, δειξε τε πάντα  
Σωμαλος ἔδε προπρονία τυπον, παις δ' ἦεν Ἰακχος  
Χεῖρι τε μιν ριπίσκει γελων Βαυβους ὑπο κολποῖς.  
Τούτ' ἐπει οὖν ἐσίδῃσε θεα, μείδῃσ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ  
Δέξατο δ' αἰολον ἀγγος, ἐν ᾧ κικέων ἐνεκείλο.

*Salmasii Plin. Exerc. in C. J. Solini Polyhistor. Tom. i. p. 750:*

*S. Paul was an object of Athenian raillery.* Raillery is a slight low kind of satire, and in religion it operates

only on little minds incapable of much reasoning. Pedants, who affect refinement of sentiment, and liberality  
of



Theſſalonians always to preſerve their ſpiritual joy, not that he meant to render them inſenſible to the evils, which he ſuffered, nor to the afflictions of the new-born church: but becauſe our ſpiritual afflictions, I mean thoſe, which we ſuffer for the glory of God, and the good of his church, are not incompatible with peace and joy of conſcience: on the contrary, it is particularly in theſe afflictions that God gives the moſt lively joys, becauſe then he beſtows on his children more abundant meaſures of his grace, and more intimate communion with himſelf. Moreover, on theſe ſad occaſions we generally become better acquainted with the pro-

of ſoul, and ſo are above the *dead-doing deeds* of vulgar perſecution, and who at the ſame time imagine themſelves the eldeſt ſons of muſes and graces, attaching I know not what ideas to habits, hard words, and empty titles, the appendages ſometimes of genius, and ſometimes of inſipidity and folly; pedantick academicks I ſay, are wonderfully adapted to raillery, and too often religion is the ſubject, being that, with which they are leaſt acquainted. Low wit is always contemptible: but it is ſuperlatively ſo, when it preſumes to buſ about *religion*. A great man ſays, “ a quotation out of *Hudibras* makes ſome men treat with levity an obligation wherein their welfare is concerned as to this world and the next: raillery of this nature is enough to make the hearer

tremble.” *Addiſon's Freeholder*.

The noble author of the characteriſticks had the courage to attack chriſtianity with this theatrical weapon. He pretended, ridicule was a teſt of truth: but his lordſhip has been completely answered, and among his numerous victors, none more fully refuted the ſophiſtry of this pretence than Brown. If truth can be *diſguiſed* it may be laughed at, and here lies all the myſtery. Socrates was miſrepreſented, and that buffoon, Ariſtophanes, rallied him out of his life. Jeſus Chriſt himſelf was ridiculed for pretending to royalty: but what did the buffoons firſt? They underſtood the principles of their art, and firſt clothed him with a ſoldier's coat, put a reed for a ſceptre into his hand, a crown of thorns on his head, and then bowed

providence of God, we feel an assurance that nothing

*bowed the knee before him, mocked, and said Hail king of the Jews!* Mat. xxvii. 29. So Ahaziah, being hurt by a fall, and having sent messengers to an idol's oracle, who returned sooner than he expected, sneeringly asked, Who sent you back? *What manner of man was he?* They as contemptuously replied, *A hairy man, with a girdle of leather about his loins—a pretended man of God!* What a pretence for such a fellow to make! See 2 Kings i. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Man of God! the king saith, Come down.—If I be a man of God, let fire come down.*

Some say, “ Shaftesbury contended not for the droll, and the buffoonish; but the humorous, the easy, and the facetious—that his opinion

if fairly examined, was no more than this—that ridicule may be made of excellent use, either against *ridicule* itself, when false and misapplied, or against grave, specious, and delusive *imposture*.” Bayle. *Shaft. Rem. H.*

Let ridicule be called what it will, it uses reason in a very buffoonish manner, when it usurps the throne of sober argument. Has Voltaire proved any thing by his *Optimist*? or Swift by his *Tale of a Tub*? or Butler by his *Hudibras*? Where nothing is proved in religion nothing exists, and where nothing exists, ridicule hath nothing to illustrate. On the contrary, where a fact is fairly ascertained, ridicule may colour it, and illustrate it, and then,

Ridentem dicere VERUM

Quid vetat?

*Horat. Sat. i. 24, 25.*

Rhetoricians make six sorts of Irony—1. *Sarcasm*, a dog-like insult. Nah. iii. 14. *I, verbis virtutem illude superbis.* Virg. *Æn.* 9.—2. *Diafyrmus*, a reproach. Friend! *wherefore art thou come?* Mat. xxvi. 50.—3. *Charientismus*, a smoothing joke. *Bona verba quæso.* Ter. 4. *Asteismus*, a polite banter. 1 Cor. viii. 1. iv. 8, 10.—5. *Mycterismus*, a turning up the nose. *Di Meliora!* Luke xvi. 14.—6. *Mimefis*, a mimicking, 1 Cor. xv. 32. *Isai.*

xxviii. 15. Micah iii. 11. I could exemplify all these from the sermons of our divines, some proper, because true, well-timed, and pointed—and others absurd for being either groundless, ill-timed, or ill tempered. Wisdom should be to wit what the tutor is to his pupil. Thus it is in Bradbury's sermons, and the direct contrary in South's. See vol. i. p. 18. note 5.—p. 14. n. 3.

thing happens without his order, and that, happen

(5) *Reflect on the state of the speaker, &c.* Many divines consider the general state of man, in a moral view, fourfold, as it is termed. The first is a state of *perfect innocence* before the fall—The second a state of *total depravity* under the fall—the third a state of *begun recovery* after regeneration—the fourth a state of *perfect holiness* in heaven. *Boston's fourfold state of man.*

Mr. Claude's rule includes more than the moral state, and comprehends every thing that goes to make up the condition, in which a person, who speaks or acts, may be. The propriety of every action depends on its exact fitness to all the circumstances of him, who performs it. Abraham offered to sacrifice his son: but he was immediately commanded of God to do so, Gen. xxii. 1, 2. his conformity to this command was his virtue—David slew the Amalekites, and *left neither man nor woman alive*, 1 Sam. xxvii. 9. but he had sufficient authority from the arbiter of life and death to do so, Deut. vii. 1, 2. See iii. 2, 3, 4. the Israelites *borrowed jewels of silver and jewels of gold* of the Egyptians, and never returned them, Exod. iii. 22, but they acted under the highest authority, ver. 21.—There are innumerable actions of this

kind, and an attention to circumstances is the only way of solving the difficulties, that attend an exposition of them. Strictly speaking, all natural actions, like all material beings, are necessary, proper, useful, and laudable in certain positions. The wisdom of man is to place and arrange them. *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven, a time to weep, a time to laugh—a time to mourn, a time to dance—a time to embrace, a time to refrain from embracing—a time to love, a time to hate—a time of war, a time of peace, &c.* Eccl. iii. 1 to 8.

S. Paul uses this topic to elucidate that famous theological enquiry concerning the future state of retribution, as it regards pagans—Jews—and Christians. *When God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, as many, as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law, and as many, as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law. Tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. They shall be differently punished, because they sinned under different circumstances.* Rom. ii. 16, 12, 9.—If the despisers of Moses's law died *without mercy, of how much sorer*



pen what will, *all things work together for good to them*

*forer punishment shall despisers of Christ's gospel be thought worthy?* Heb. x. 28, 29.

Thus he illustrates the charity of the churches of Macedonia—they were liberal in a great trial of affliction, and in deep poverty, 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2, &c. Thus he enforces his request to Philemon, *thou owest unto me thine own self*, 19. and recommends Onesimus to him, *not now as a servant only : but a brother beloved*, 16.—And thus S. Peter heightens his account of the impiety of false teachers, and the misery of backsliders. 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Here follows an exemplification of our author's rule. Acts xxiv. 25. The preacher having observed from Josephus the characters of Felix and Drusilla, and having given a brief history of his avarice, luxury, and oppression, proceeds to admire the wisdom and courage of S. Paul, his wisdom amid such a variety of subjects in choosing to speak of *righteousness* to a covetous man; *temperance* to a man devoted to luxury; and *judgment to come* to a man, whose government had been oppressive; having remarked the courage of the prisoner, he adds, "My brethren, when men preach to establish their reputation, when they seek their own glory instead of that of Jesus Christ, they choose subjects, in which

they can display their genius and flatter their hearers. Do they preach before a professed infidel? they choose to speak only of morality, and would blush to mention the venerable words *covenant, satisfaction*. Do they preach before giddy high-minded people, who would be offended, if the duties of religion were pressed home? The whole sermon shall consist of election, reprobation, and irresistible grace. Do they preach before a lascivious court? the subject shall be the liberty of the gospel and the mercy of God. There is an art of allying (an art truly detestable; but an art too well known in all ages of the church) there is an art of allying our own interests with those of our ministry, and, without renouncing his character, a politick preacher will aim at harmonizing his preaching and his passions. Servant of Jesus Christ, and slave to his own interest, he makes *merchandize of God's word*! Court-preachers! public pests! behold St. Paul and blush at your baseness! before Felix, before Drusilla he cries, *the unclean shall not inherit the kingdom of God*. In your pulpits he would have described in lively colours innocence oppressed, the faith of treaties expiring, the Rhine overflowing with blood, the Palatinate smoking in its own ashes! - - -



*them that love God.* This gives us true rest, a joy which nothing is capable of disturbing. (5)

but let ministers support the dignity of their character, never had orators a finer opportunity of being heard with attention; never were subjects more susceptible of a grave and sober eloquence than those of which they treat. They have the most powerful motives to work with, and the strongest passions to work upon. They have an eternity of glory to promise, and an eternity of misery to denounce. They are sent by a master, in whose presence all the kings of the universe are but *as the small dust of the balance*. Behold S. Paul all penetrated with the dignity of his office! he forgets the grandeur of Felix! he does more, he makes him forget himself! he makes him receive even censures with respect! he preaches of *righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come!*" Saurin. *Ser. tom. x. ser. sixieme.*

One of the most ridiculous sermons that I have met with is abusive of this common place. In general the topic is *person*—in particular *condition*—and in a more especial manner *sex*. "Luke i. 26. *The angel Gabriel was sent to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.* - We see the virgin in her perigæum, and her degrees in

this lower part of her orb are prick't out in the text.

1. A virgin supposeth a *woman*, a degree below man—

2. A *virgin* one degree below woman. - - A virgin is a cypher, God made it not—

3. *Espoused*, that's somewhat lower yet. It is God's and the king's highway from maid to wife: but is neither, and therefore inferior to both—

4. *To Joseph*, this brings her lower still—

5. *Of the house of David*, lower still—

6. Her name *Mary*, yet lower. Her husband

could not call, *Mary!* but it reminded her of her poverty—

7. *Of Nazareth*, we are now at the ground, nay

the grave, for Galilee was in the region of the shadow of death. From this lowly

state of *Mary* we gather comfort for ourselves, for 1. Our

soul is a woman—2. She is a *virgin*—

3. She is *espoused* to some favourite study—

4. To the *body*, that is to the flesh, which is the carpenter's shop,

and the spirit, which is the carpenter—

5. This carpenter is nobly descended—

6. *Mary* is *Lady*, and that's the soul's name too—

7. She dwells here at Nazareth, &c. &c." This Sermon is entitled "*The Virgin Mary*, preached in

S. *Mary's College* (New College) Oxford, on *Lady-day*, 1641. By the LEARNED Thomas Master, B. D."

## VIII.

## REMARK THE TIME OF A WORD OR ACTION. (6)

For example, St. Paul in his first epistle to Timothy requires, that in the publick services of the

(6) *Remark the time of an expression or action.* Time is an article of so much consequence to the propriety of all publick orations, that rhetoricians always lay it down as a principal rule.

“In judiciis frequentissima est. . . Si dicatur signator, qui *ante diem* tabularum decessit; aut commississe aliquid, vel cum *infans* esset, vel cum *omnino natus non esset*. Præter id, quod omnia facile argumenta, aut ex iis, quæ *ante rem* facta sunt, aut ex *conjunctis* rei, aut *consequentibus* ducuntur.” *Quint. Inst. lib. v. cap. 10.*

Cicero makes a fine use of this place in his oration *pro Mil.*—*pro lege Manil.*—*pro Cæl.* &c.

Divines very justly lay down the same rule as of the utmost importance. “Imprimis hoc tenendum, *ante omnia*, ut textus accommodetur ad *præsentia tempora*, quod in omnibus, quoad potest, fieri debet.” *Ursini Method. form. Concion.*

The same writer adds, that “as every *text* contains

a variety of matter, the preacher neither can, nor must attempt to discuss all, and therefore, as he will be obliged to select some one article, it would be unpardonable to select that, which was least fitted to the time.”

Another says the same of *common places*, that the former said of the text. “As it would be a vain attempt to use them all at any one time, so the preacher will be obliged to make a choice, and he should choose those, which best suit the time. Non semper omnes tractandos esse: sed habito delectu *præcipuos*, atque eos in primis, qui *præsentibus auditibus* magis conveniunt, et ad *præsentem ecclesiæ statum quadrant* . . reliquos in aliud tempus reservandos esse.” *Georg. Sobnii de interp. Ecclesiastica.*

I believe, it will not appear needless to press an observation of this article, when we consider how many absurdities proceed from an inattention to it.

the church prayers should be made for *all men*; but *first for kings, and for those that were in authority.*

1. They, who read sermons composed by others, are very often surprized into violations of time. A German divine says, "One of these retailers of small ware having picked up an old homily composed some years before when the plague was raging in the country, preached it to his congregation on the Lord's Day. Toward the close, having sharply reproved vice, he added *for these vices it is, that God has visited you, and your families with that cruel scourge the plague, which is now spreading every where in this town.* At his uttering these words the people were all so thunder-struck, that the chief magistrate was obliged to go to the pulpit, and to ask him, *For God's-sake, sir, pardon the interruption, and inform me where the plague is that I may instantly endeavour to prevent its farther spreading—The plague, sir!* replied the preacher, *I know nothing about the plague. Whether it be in the town or not, it is in my homily.* Sive pestis—five non—ego sic in postilla mea reperi. *Keckermanni Rhet. Eccles. lib. ii. cap. postrem. ii.*

2. They, who spend all their time in confuting old errors, believed formerly,

but exploded now; or in stating, explaining, and establishing some *truths*, formerly denied, or doubted, or misunderstood, but now generally believed by their auditors; they are inattentive to time, and are heard with disgust. These preachers would act with less impropriety, were they not to affect to be the sole conservators of orthodoxy.

3. The doctrine of time is very important on the subject of *prophecies*—on that of *miracles*—extraordinary gifts—dreams—visions—revelations—inspirations—&c. Pretenders to these mistake time in a manner very gross indeed. There goes a *prophecy* about of Bishop Usher's concerning *the slaying of the witnesses*, Rev. xi.—There are many *miraculous* events related by Fox of the English reformers—There are many *extraordinary* and extravagant tales told in Clarke's lives of the Puritans—and, in short, there are *enthusiasts* in all our parties, though in none so many as in the church of Rome. The very Deists are Enthusiasts, witness the miraculous answer to Lord Herbert of Cherbury's prayer—but all these forget the time, in which they live; for now they ought  
not



*thority*. Here it is very natural to remark the time. It was when the church and the apostles were every where persecuted; when the faithful were the objects of the hatred and calumny of all mankind, and in particular of the cruelty of these tyrants. Yet none of this rough treatment could stop the course of Christian charity. St. Paul not only requires every believer to pray for all men: but he would have it done in *publick*, that all the world might know the maxims of Christianity, always kind, patient, and benevolent. Believers consider themselves as bound in duty to all men, though men do nothing to oblige them to it. He was aware, malicious slanderers would call this worldly policy and human prudence, and would say, Christians only meant to flatter the great, and to court their favour; yet even this calumny does not prevent S. Paul, he orders them to pray  
*pub-*

not to expect, nor the world to believe such information. In the famous dispute between Dr. Middleton, and his opponents, concerning the *time*, when miraculous powers *ceased* in the christian church, four things are rendered very clear—1. That there had been *true* miracles, otherwise there would have been no counterfeits—2. That miracles afforded *evidence* very popular and pleasing—3. That imposture very *early* infected christianity—and 4. That *credulity* is a great blemish in a minister, and propagates error and vice more than truth and virtue.

Not to enlarge, we shall

only observe, time elucidates many scriptures. Lev. xviii. *Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister in her life-time*, this law forbids *polygamy*: but it does not prohibit the marriage of the sister of a *deceased* wife.—2 Kings v. 26. *Is it a time, to receive money?*—Isaiah i. *Isaiah saw a vision in the days of Uzziab, &c.*—Isai. xi. 10. *In that day a root of Jesse shall stand for an ensign.*—Eph. ii. 12. *At that time ye were without Christ*—2 Sam. xvii. 7. *The counsel is not good at this time*—Isai. lv. 6. *Seek the Lord while he may be found.*—Phil. iv. *Ye sent once and again to my necessity.*—Jer. xxviii. 16. *This year thou shalt die, &c. &c.*



*publickly*, and *first* for civil governors. We ought always to discharge our duty, and, for the rest, submit to the unjust accounts that men give of our conduct. (7)

## IX.

## OBSERVE PLACE. (8)

St. Paul says to the Philippians, *forgetting the things, which are behind, and reaching forth unto those*

(7) *Example.* Mr. Saurin's observations on Peter's denial of Christ, and Christ's love to Peter are drawn from this source. *The time* of Peter's denial makes his crime black indeed! the *time* of the lord's looking at him illuminates his looks! Hear our preacher. "At the very time, when Jesus Christ was giving the tenderest marks of his love, Peter discovered the blackest ingratitude to him; while Jesus redeemed Peter, Peter denied him; while Jesus Christ yielded to the bloody death of the cross for Peter, Peter refused to confess him; but - - - Jesus looks at him! My brethren, what do these looks say! how eloquent are those eyes! never was a discourse so effectual, never did an orator express himself with so much force! It is the *man of griefs* complaining of a new burden while he is ready to sink under what he already bears. It

is the beneficent redeemer pitying a soul ready to be lost! It is the *apostle of our profession* preaching in chains. In fine, it is the *sovereign* of the hearts of men, the almighty God curbing the efforts of the devil, and taking his conquest away."

These *four* last articles are the parts of the second division of the discourse. *Saur. Ser. tom. i. sur l' Abnegation de S. Pierre.*

(8) *Observe place.* Rhetoricians, after Quintilian, put this article, place, under the head *quantity*, and the latter gives Cicero's oration for Milo as an example. We will explain it by a scripture example, and *state the case* of Elisha causing the death of forty-two children for ridiculing his bald head. 2 Kings ii. 23, 24, 25. The stating of a case is the issue, to which it is brought from the *complaint* of the accuser, and the *defence* of the accused.

Thus,

*those things, which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ*

Thus, let us suppose, Elisha was accused of killing forty-two children. Elisha confessed he killed them; but said, he killed them *justly*. Now the stating of the case here is, whether Elisha killed the forty-two children *justly*.

A case may be stated *four* ways. 1. A case is *conjectural*, when it is enquired, whether the thing were *done* or *not*. As whether *Elisha* did procure the *death* of these children? *Two bears came and tare them.*—2. A case is *finite*, when we enquire into the name, nature, and *definition* of the supposed crime, as, *Elisha killed them*: but he did not commit *murder*, where *murder* must be defined.——

3. A case in *quality* is, where it is enquired in what *manner* a fact was done, as *Elisha killed the children*: but he did it *justly*. Here we must enquire into *circumstances*, and prove what in this case may be deemed *just*, or *unjust*.——

4. A case in *quantity* is, when we enquire into the *greatness*, or *smallness* of a crime. Here we amplify or diminish, and by considering how the fact was circumstanced by *time*, *PLACE*, *words*, and *actions*, enquiring who? what? where? by whose aid? why? how? when? and comparing things with

things, we determine what may be deemed *great* or *little*.

*Place* is of great use in theology, both to *prove* and *illustrate*. Moses first published his mission in the most learned court in the world at that time, consequently later prophets had a right to glory that God sent Moses and Aaron to shew signs and wonders in the *land of Ham*. Psal. cv. 26, 27.—The prophets taught in publick places before assemblies of the whole nation, and herein they gloried over the affected privacy of false idol prophets. Isai. viii. 19. *Wizards peep, and mutter*—xlv. 19. *I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth*—Psal. xl. 9. *I have preached righteousness in the great congregation.*—Jesus Christ published his revelation in a place the most likely in the world to detect a false prophet—Mat. ii. 1. *Jesus was born in Judea*—Luke iv. 15. *Jesus taught in their synagogues*—Mat. v. 1. *On a mountain*—Mat. xiii. 1. *By the sea-side*—John viii. 2. *In the temple*—Our Lord used this topic before the priests at his trial. John xviii. 20. *I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue; and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in*

*Christ Jesus.* The place where he writes this furnishes a very beautiful consideration. He was then in *prison,*

*secret have I said nothing.*—The apostles bore witness of his resurrection on the day of Pentecost in the very city where he had been put to death—in publick places—and in courts of judicature. Acts ii. 46. *They continued daily in the temple—v. 20. Go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life—xxxvi. 26. This thing, king Agrippa, was not done in a corner.* John iii. 23. *John was baptizing at Enon, because there was much water.* In all these, and similar passages, place is proof.

Place serves also to illustrate. Deut. xxxii. 10. *The Lord instructed his people in the waste howling wilderness—Amos viii. 12, 13. Flee away, seer! into the land of Judah, prophesy not again any more at Bethel; for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court—John iv. 6. Jesus sat on the well—John ii. 2. Both Jesus and his disciples, were called to the marriage of Cana, and his mother was there—Acts xix. 21. Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia, and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. What a stretch of soul!*

“ Circa locum spectatur, sacer sit an prophanus—publicus an privatus—tuus an

alienus—frequens an solitarius—pauperis an divitis—honesti nominis an infamis. Turpius erat Antonio pro rostris in conspectu populi Romani vomere. Nec indecorum est bono gravi que viro domi in nuptiis saltare, quod in foro faceret indecenter; aut in balneo nudare corpus, quod in convivio turpiter fieret. Item gravior culpa est in templis garrere frivola, aut oculis licitari puellas quam in foro aut theatro, &c.” *Erasm. de Rat. concionandi. lib. ii.*

The last article, mentioned by Erasmus, is of very little use in regard to the non-conformists in this country, for a man would be accounted little better than wild among us, if he should whisper and stare people out of countenance during divine service: but in some places of worship such vulgarities are too common. Complimenting, whispering, staring, and looking people out of countenance with glasses in places of worship are indecent practices imported from the theatre, and extremely offensive to all, who distinguish between religion and a farce. Such indecencies are below serious reproof, especially the last. An easy censure, and, I think, the best the offender deserves, when he opticises the preacher,



*prison*, at Rome, loaded with chains, and deprived of his liberty; yet he speaks as if he were as much at liberty as any man in the world; as able to act as he pleased, and to dispose of himself as ever: he talks of having entered a course, running a race, forgetting things behind, pressing toward those that were before, and, in short, of hoping to gain a prize; all these are actions of a man enjoying full liberty. (9) How could he, who was in a prison, be at the same time on a race-course? how could he run, who was loaded with irons? how could he hope to win a prize, who every day expected a sentence of death? But it is not difficult to conciliate these things: his bonds and imprisonment did not hinder the course of his faith and obedience. His prison was converted into an agreeable Stadium, and death for the Gospel might well be considered under the image of a complete victory,

preacher, is for the preacher to take his own glass out of his pocket and opticiſe him again. I have ſeen a man of no ſmall face ſo confounded by this treatment as to bluſh, and go backward, and quit the place. It happened unluckily for this pulpit-gazer, the preacher was explaining to his people at the very time, Mat. vii. 12. *All things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them; for this is the law and the prophets.*

Examples might be given, were not this note already too long: but two excellent ones may be ſeen in Saurin's

Sermon on the life of *a courtier*, from 2 Sam. xix. 32—39. and in Bp. Maſſillon's to his clergy on the conduct of a clergyman in his *pariſh*. In both, reflections ariſe from the *places* in queſtion. *Saur. Ser. tom. iii. 5.—Maſſillon Confer. tom. i. 8.*

(9) *I preſs toward the mark*, Phil. iii. 14. *Eſt in hoc, et duobus ſuperioribus verſibus, continua quædam metaphora, ſumpta ab iis qui curſu certant in ſtadio; et voces hic uſurpatæ ſunt plane agonifticæ, et ſcriptoribus agonifticis uſurpatæ.—See 1 Cor. ix. 24.*



victory, for a martyr gains an unfading crown as a reward of his sufferings. (1)

## X.

### CONSIDER THE PERSONS ADDRESSED. (2)

Let us again take S. Paul's words for an example. *Recompense to no man evil for evil*, Rom. xii. 17. They, to whom the apostle addressed these

#### (1) *Reward of Martyrdom.*

The primitive Christians considered martyrdom as the highest dignity, to which a man could aspire; hence Cyprian, Epiphanius, Isidore and others, particularly Tertullian, speak of martyrdom as a far more glorious reward than the Grecian combatants gained in their games: and their rewards, as Tully says, were the most glorious, that Greece had to bestow. "*Certaminis nomine Deus nobis martyria proponit. - - Hic quoque liberalitas magis quam acerbitas dei præest. - - Amavit quæ vocaverat in salutem invitare ad gloriam: ut qui gaudeamus liberati exulemus etiam coronari.*" *Tertul. adv. Gnostic. cap. 6.*

(2) *Consider the persons addressed.* A knowledge of the persons addressed is a branch of science essential to a minister in several parts of his ministerial labours. For example,

1. *In studying the holy scriptures.* The propriety of much

scripture language, especially that of the bold figurative kind can only appear by the genius of the people addressed. See Ezek. xvi. 23. Joel ii. 2, &c. Nahum ii. iii, &c.—The equity and fitness of many mosaical *institutions* appear by a comparison of them with the condition of the people.—The discourses of our *Saviour*, and the epistles of *S. Paul* are both more beautiful and more intelligible by this consideration.—The theological systems of the Jews, the moral philosophy of the learned heathens, the mythology of the vulgar herd of pagans, and the conditions of primitive churches, all elucidate the *doctrines* of the new testament.

2. Knowledge of persons addressed is essential in the *popish* and *hierarchic* controversy. While these *œconomies* are embraced by mercenary men, rewarded by state emoluments, and guarded by the sword, it will be but lost labour to address  
diga

these words, were *Romans*, whose perpetual maxim was violently to revenge publick injuries, and totally to destroy those, who intended to destroy them,

dignified priests on articles of farther reformation. It was an apt similitude, that an ingenious gentleman used concerning the popish ceremonies retained in some reformed churches under pretence of bringing Romanists over to themselves. "You resemble, said he, a floating vessel fastened to a rock by a rope; if you in the vessel think to pull the rock to you by the rope, you will find, on trying, a contrary effect will follow. Hence that well-known saying of Bishop Bonner; when he heard that Cranmer and Ridley had retained some ceremonies of the Roman church, he exclaimed, "Since our boath goes down with them so well, they will shortly feed upon the beef too!" An exclamation rather low and unepiscopal: but, however, it was the most propheticall vulgarity that his lordship ever uttered, as the after-history of the English episcopal church plainly shewed. See *Lewis Du Moulin, ubi sup.*

3. Knowledge of persons is essential to a minister in addressing both the *righteous* and the *wicked*. No man addresses the wicked so forcibly as he, who best knows human nature in general,

and the condition of each sinner in particular. Had our Dean Swift, who often went disguised into low company to study human nature unmasked, made a holy use of his knowledge by reproving and reforming such people, he might have been one of the most useful ministers of his day. A man, who has seen human nature in such places is in possession of a thousand topicks not to be learned in higher life, where almost all is trick and masquerade, what Archbishop Leighton somewhere calls an interchange of vanity and lies. The same may be said in regard to the *pious* part of an auditory. What can a young spark, who has no piety himself, nor one pious intimate in the world, say to pious auditors worth their hearing! Religion itself is disgraced by being in such company. To put a bible in such a man's hand is like hanging Sir Isaac Newton's Principia about the neck of a beast. All other things may be dispensed with: but a thorough knowledge of the singular exercises of pious minds under conviction, conversion, temptation, affliction, in prospects of death and in retrospects of sin, can never

them, or had offered them any affronts; witness the Carthaginians and Corinthians. They totally destroyed Carthage, because she had carried her arms into Italy by Hannibal's means, and had been upon the point of ruining Rome. Corinth they sacked and burnt for having affronted their ambassadors. (3) You may also remark this par-

never be dispensed with in a minister of religion, nor can he attain this knowledge without personal experience.

We often speak of a minister's *speaking to the heart*. The phrase is scriptural, and as Erasmus observes, is there used for the *consolatory* language of the *gospel*, in distinction from that of the law, which convicts, and condemns. See Isai. xl. 2. Hos. ii. 14. Now this, as he adds, cannot be done but by a man, whose own heart has been comforted by the same consolation. "Nullus autem potest loqui ad cor populi, nisi loquatur ex corde." *De Rat. Conc. lib. i.* The phrase, *speaking to the heart*, in modern use, stands for that excellent talent, which some ministers possess, of addressing the conscience, bringing home the matter to the man, speaking *ad rem, ad hominem*, what shall I call it? It divides *asunder soul and spirit*, and is a *discoverer of the thoughts and intents of the heart*. Heb. iv. 12. Such a minister surrounds his auditor, and wraps him up in

convictions of sin, or in *consolations of God*, which are neither *few nor small*.

3. Knowledge of persons is essential to a minister in enforcing duties. He must distinguish husbands, wives—masters, servants—governors, subjects—parents, children—ministers, magistrates, &c. and give to each his portion in due season, rightly dividing the word of truth.

4. Finally, knowledge of persons is essential to *casuistry*. Cases of conscience differ in different circumstances; not that there is one gospel for the rich, and another for the poor: but because the *same God over all*, being *rich in mercy to all*, requires different services in different circumstances. See Acts xxi. 20, 21, &c. xxi. 40. Gal. ii. 2. iv. 13, 20, &c.

(3) *The Romans sacked Corinth for affronting their ambassadors.* See *Appian in Lyb. —Vell. Paterc. lib. ii. 16.*—See also the just reflections of Bishop Bossuet on these subjects *Hist. Univers. vol. i. chap. 6.* and above all let us never forget that necessary remark



particular circumstance; that, although the Romans had succeeded in avenging their injuries, the empire owing its grandeur to such excesses, yet their success did not hinder the apostle from saying *Recompense to no man evil for evil*; because neither examples nor successes ought to be the rules

remark of Mr. Rollin in his *Ancient Hist.* vol. xii. b. 26. p. 2. c. 2. "*Perfect morality is no where to be learned but from the word of God*," not that natural religion with all its blindness could allow of these excesses. See *Cicero de Offic. lib.* iii. but, after admitting all its excellencies, it leaves us proud, and far from the image of God: exhibiting indeed something of the rational, but debasing it with a mixture of the brutal and infernal. When we refer to various authors, and various articles tending to elucidate the holy scriptures, we do so on supposition that it is proper to compose a sermon of several topicks properly chosen and arranged. Most divines make mixed observations, that is, they sometimes take them with the utmost propriety from various sources, as from *person—place, &c.* The following example will explain my meaning.

"2 Sam. iii. 38. *Know ye not that there is a prince, and a great man fallen this day in Israel.* - - - Obf. 1. A great man's death passes not without publick notice; *the King said, Know ye not, &c.* Obf. 2.

*Extraordinary persons are not exempted from the common laws of mortality; the prince, and the great man fall.* Obf. 3. They, who stand in high, stand in the most slippery places; Abner fell by assassination. Obf. 4. *The holy land is not a place privileged against the arrest of death. Abner fell in Israel.*" *Commemoration Sermon on the death of Colonel Char. Carvendish, slain in the service of Char. I. Preached at Darby 1674, by Wm. Nailour.*

Nothing can be more plain and simple than these observations, yet from them the preacher derives a great variety of edifying instructions, very pertinent, and very proper to the occasion.

The time of S. Paul's conversion is considerable, for it was when he was in the highest rage, and when the church was most depressed—The place also is remarkable, it was near *Damascus*. Several other circumstances also heighten the glory of it, thunder, lightning, &c. A discourse on Saul's conversion is therefore properly mixed. See *Beaufobre Disc. xxx. tom. vi.*

rules of our conduct, but solely the will of God, and the law of Christianity. (4)

(4) *The revealed will of God, and not the success of those who depart from it, should be a Christian's rule of action.* This remark is of great consequence in theology. The whole book of Job seems to have been written with a view to this article. Job was afflicted. His friends thought, his condition a proof of his impiety. Not at all, replies Job, *The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they, that provoke God, are secure.* xii. 6.

There are five sorts of ministers, who ought to study this article. 1. They who make worldly prosperity a mark of the true church of Christ. It is certain, we should never find the head of the church by this rule, and it is not likely we should discover his members by it. See vol. i. page 280, note 5.

2. They who aspire at nothing in the church but preferment, and by unworthy actions obtain it, should regard this subject. These reprobates lose all sense of the guilt of succeeding in the pleasure of success.

3. They ought to study this, who choose their religion by popularity, who embrace what most allow because the most allow it. The religion of Christ is an unfavourable thing to the vitiated tastes of the bulk of mankind: and he, who expects

to find wholesome food on tables prepared by such persons, will find himself on a trial grossly deceived.

4. They, who impose on their own consciences, and flatter themselves into unscriptural compliances under pretence of obtaining wider fields of usefulness, are under the same sad mistake. They succeed, in what? In doing *partial* good; for there are truths, which they dare not mention. They succeed, in what? In doing *momentary* good, which expires, when they depart. Success to themselves, and not to the cause at large, is their object. Were they to refuse compliance with what their consciences abhor, they might form FREE societies, which would perpetuate themselves, and even their minister by choosing a succession like him. Alas! how few have such extensive, disinterested views!

5. They are also far from Monsieur Claude's observation, who adopt any thing in the course of their ministry, how silly soever, that gives them popularity, which they call the success of the gospel. Diogenes, going to declaim to a very few auditors, and loth to say that to a few, which was worthy of being heard by many, began to sing, the novelty of which

## XI.

EXAMINE THE PARTICULAR STATE OF PERSONS  
ADDRESSED. (5)

For example, *recompense to no man evil for evil*.  
St. Paul writes to Romans: but to Roman Chris-  
tians,

which soon brought auditors around him. Anaximenes, not being able to attract the attention of his audience by gravely declaiming, took out some very fine saltfish, and so collected the eyes and attention of his auditors. Attention acquired by such odd methods is not worth having, and yet how many means as fantastical as these have been hit on by preachers under pretence of exciting attention, acquiring popularity, and ensuring success. Vid. *Dan. Heinsii Laus Afini*. p. 1.

(5) *Examine the particular state of persons addressed*. Thus we account for many seeming contradictions in scripture. Moses made a serpent of brass, Num. xxi. 9. Hezekiah broke it in pieces, because, *in his days, the children of Israel did burn incense to it*. 2 Kings xviii. 4.—One prophet says, *Blow the trumpet in the new moon, and on our solemn feast days, for this is a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob*. Psal. lxxxii. 3, 4.—Another says, *New moons and sabbaths I cannot away with, even the solemn*

*meeting is iniquity. My soul hateth them, for your hands are full of blood*. Isai. i. 13, 15.—*I said indeed thy house should walk before me for ever: but now the lord saith, Be it far from me*. 1 Sam. ii. 30.—*At what instant I speak concerning a nation to destroy it, if that nation turn from their evil, I will repent*. Jer. xviii. 7, 8.—*Man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law*. Rom. iii. 28.—*By works man is justified, and not by faith only*. James ii. 24. These, and a thousand other passages, are harmonized only by an attention to the particular condition of the persons addressed. S. Paul beautifully calls this variety *a change of voice*. Gal. iv. 26. The same heavenly instructor speaks: but speaks, so to say, in different tones adapted to the different tempers of the auditors. This notion of revelation is a very just one, and as it authorizes our ministers in varying their addresses to their hearers, so it condemns those loose, desultory declamations, which address all, and so affect none.



*tians*, who saw themselves hated and persecuted by their fellow-citizens, and in general abused by the whole world. Yet, however reasonable resentment might appear at first sight, the apostle would

The peculiar circumstances of the person speaking also serves to account for many things, that fall under the immediate notice of theologians, and at first appear very unaccountable. We will exemplify a few.

1. Nothing is more common than to hear men of equal abilities affirm *directly contrary* to one another on the *same* subject. Tillotson and Holcroft had been chamber-fellows at Clare-hall. Tillotson declared in his old age, "I do in my conscience believe the [*episcopal*] church of England to be the best constituted church in the world." *Serm. on 1 Cor. iii.* 15. Holcroft thought, the episcopal church of England was an image of the beast, as savage and more silly than the beast itself. How are we to account for this variety? Consider the condition of each *speaker*. The image of the beast made Tillotson Archbishop of Canterbury; and the best constituted church in the world was very near hanging Holcroft for non-conformity.

2. Nothing is more frequently seen than the same divine differing from *himself*. Stillingfleet did so. In his

*Irenicum*, he declared that presbyterian government was more conformable to scripture and reason than Episcopacy—that Bishops ought not to impose any ceremonies, which have no foundation in scripture—that schism was on their side, who imposed ceremonies, and not on theirs, who refused submission to them. But in his *Answer to several late treatises*, he calls those schismatics, who deny submission to the government of the episcopal church of England, and adds, "The constitution of our church stands upon this *single point*, all things are lawful, which are NOT FORBIDDEN." Whence this difference? The peculiar condition of the speaker is to be considered. The *Irenicum* was published when the author was minister of one single Sutton in Bedfordshire. The *Answer* came out about 18 years after, when - - - what? God forbid we should say, men should not live and learn: but it happens very unluckily, when illumination and preferment come together!

Bishop Stillingfleet's opponents said, the *point* on which his church stood, "would

would not have them obey such passions as the light of reason, the instinct of nature, and the desire of their own preservation might seem to excite.

He

“ would make a pure fricafsee of religion, it would justify the addition of oil, cream, spittle, and salt in baptism, and it would as much authorize a minister to preach the gospel with a helmet on his head, and a sword and buckler in his hand, as signs of our spiritual warfare, as it would the cross in baptism. It is not enough in religion, that things are not *forbidden*, they must be *commanded*. Jer. vii. 31.” *Lewis Du Moulin ubi supra.*

3. Divines have seen a whole church change its *doctrine*, and yet retain its *creeds*, and tests of orthodoxy; and, what is more extraordinary, declare the *same* tests the guardians of two systems of divinity as *opposite* as particular election and general redemption, and both of them gospel for the time. What! Has the gospel of 1555 been explained by any new revelation since, or is the old gospel an *uncertain sound*? Neither: but the particular conditions of leading churchmen have altered with the times, and with the tempers of civil governors.

4. Divines have seen a church change its *temper* of governing, and yet not alter

its *form* of government. Stratagem and collusion, duplicity and soft words took place with Tillotson, and Tenison, of Parkerian fire, and Laudean pride. The latter in days of yore excommunicated and persecuted non-conformists to death: but the former in later times tell us they pity and pray for us, and esteem us their dear brethren in Christ. Have they made an abatement of one word in terms of conformity *from the day that Israel came up out of Egypt to this day*? Consider Mr. Claude’s eleventh common place, *take advice, speak your minds, and first of all give thanks for kings, and for all that are in authority, that you lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty!*

5. We sometimes amuse ourselves with contrasting the great *doers* with the great *sufferers* in religion in the days of our ancestors. We weigh the merits of Fox and Coverdale against those of Cranmer and Cox—We set Cartwright against Whitgift—Baxter and Bates against Laud and Cofins—Watts against Atterbury—Bunyan against Bugg—and so on; and we enquire - - - No,

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we

He exhorted them to leave vengeance to God, and advised them only to follow the dictates of love. The greatest persecutors of the primitive Christians were the Jews, on whom the Roman Christians could easily have avenged themselves under various pretexts; for the Jews were generally hated and despised by all other nations, and nothing could be easier than to avail themselves of that publick hatred, to which the religion of the Jews exposed them. Nevertheless, S. Paul not only says in general *Render not evil for evil*: but in particular *Recompense to no man evil for evil*. As if he had

we will not enquire, *Clau-*  
*dite jam rivos, pueri, sat*  
*prata biberunt.*

Finally, this place is useful in many single theological questions. For example, Why did not the apostles speak against putting infant-baptism in the room of circumcision? The particular state of the primitive church did not require it. Infant-baptism had not been thought of then. Why did not the apostles make creeds and canons? They would have defeated their own particular view, which was to put individuals into a capacity of making creeds and canons for themselves, &c. &c.

*Consider the particular state of the persons addressed.* The use of the moral law is thus placed in a very proper light, “*Ufus legis moralis varius est secundum varios status hominis. Primo ho-*

*illam vivificaretur. Ufus sub*  
*statu peccati est, ut hominem*  
*de transgressione et reatu ar-*  
*guat - - ut illum sic con-*  
*dictum ad gratiam deside-*  
*randam compellat - - Ser-*  
*vit præterea lex in hoc statu*  
*Deo, ut hominem cohi-*  
*beat, tum peccato, ut pecca-*  
*tum augeat. Tertius usus*  
*legis moralis erga hominem*  
*jam Spiritu Dei et Christi re-*  
*natum conveniens statui gra-*  
*tiae est, ut sit perpetua regu-*  
*la vitæ. Ex hisce usibus fa-*  
*cile colligere est, quousque*  
*lex moralis inter fideles, et*  
*sub gratia Christi constitutos*  
*obtineat, et quousque abro-*  
*gata sit. Arminii op. Theol.*  
*Disputat. Pub. xii.*

To give an example,

Rom. xi. 33. *O the depth,*  
&c. in order to enter into the apostle's meaning, it is necessary to consider the *subject*, to which he applies his text, and never to lose sight of the *design* of this whole epistle.



had said, Do not injure those, on whom you could most easily avenge yourselves ; hurt not the most violent

epistle. The apostle principally means to oppose a scandalous schism, which rent the church of Rome ; that church was composed of two sorts of Christians, some of them came from paganism, others from Judaism ; the latter despised the former, so they had always treated foreigners ; they insisted on it, that for their own parts they had a natural right to the blessings, which the Messiah came to bestow upon his church ; because, being born Jews, they were the lawful heirs of Abraham, to whom the promise was made, whereas the Gentiles partook of these blessings only by mere grace. St. Paul opposes this prejudice, proves that Jews and Gentiles were alike *under sin*, that they had an equal need of the covenant of grace, that they both owed their vocation to the mercy of God, that no one was rejected as a Gentile, or admitted as a Jew, and that such only had a part in this salvation as had been chosen in the eternal decrees of God. The Jews could not relish such humbling ideas, nor adjust all this doctrine with their high notions of the prerogatives of their nation, much less could they enter into S. Paul's system of predestination. S. Paul applies

this chapter, out of which our text is taken, and the two preceding ones, to answer their difficulties. He turns the subject (if I may so speak) on every side to make it clear. He reasons, proves, argues : but after he had heaped proofs upon proofs, reasons upon reasons, solutions upon solutions, he acknowledges in the words of my text, that it was his glory to rest beneath his subject : he classes himself in a manner with the most ignorant of those, to whom he writes, he acknowledges that he has not received a sufficient measure of the spirit of God to fathom such abysses, and he exclaims upon the brink of this ocean, *O the depth, &c. - - how unsearchable, &c. Sur les profondeurs divine, tom. xi.*

Monsieur Saurin's design in this sermon is to promote Christian love among people, who think differently concerning the decrees. In order to this he observes, that all the ways, in which it pleases God to discover himself to men, though shining with light are yet shaded with adorable darkness, they are labyrinths, in which feeble reason is lost. Our ideas of the deity are ideas of a vast profound—the works of nature are a great deep—the ways

violent enemies of the name of Jesus Christ, and the

ways of providence—and the doctrines of revelation are also distinguished by the same characters. He examines the doctrine of decrees, and among many systems chooses that, which appears to him the true one; but, adds he, “should you ask me after all, whether my own system be liable to no objections? I would lay my hand upon my mouth, I would acknowledge my ignorance, and freely own, that I chose this subject less to clear than to press its difficulties, and hereby to make you perceive that toleration, which Christians mutually owe each other on this article. We ourselves also exclaim on the borders of this abyss, *O the depth, &c.*”

Mr. S. reminds me of Bucholtzer, one of the greatest of the German reformers. “Timiditas quædam Bucholcero a quibusdam objecta est, quod cum eximiis a deo dotibus esset decoratus, in certamen tamen cum rabiosis illius seculi Theologis noluit descendere - - ipse juvenis sæpe ad amicos aiebat, *Desii disputare cœpi supputare*, quoniam illud dissipationem, hoc collectionem significat - - vidit de religionis Christianæ negotiis controversas ecclesias orthodoxis moveri ab iis quos nulla unquam amoris Dei scintilla calefacerat. Vidit ex

diuturnis theologorum rixis utilitatis nihil detrimenti plurimum in ecclesias redundasse. Quapropter omnis ejus cura in hoc erat, ut auditores fidei suæ commissos doceret bene vivere, et beate mori - - et annotatum in adversariis amici ejus repererunt, *permultos in extremo agone constitutos gratias ipsi hoc nomine egisse*, quod ipsius ductu servatorem suum Jesum agnovissent, cujus in cognitione pulchrum vivere mori vero longe pulcherrimum ducebant. Atque haud scio annon hoc ipsum longe Bucholcero coram deo gloriosius sit futurum, quam si aliquot contentiosorum libellorum myriadas posteritatis memoriæ consecrasset. *Melch. Adam. vitæ Germ. Theolog. in vita Bucholceri.* See also *Baxter's Saint's Rest*, p. iv. c. 3.

(6) *Hurt not those, who strive to destroy the gospel.* Mr. Claude does not mean here to inculcate the senseless notions of passive obedience, and non-resistance, as too many of our divines have done from such passages of scripture. In a letter to Monsieur Michaeli, speaking of the disputes in England, he says, “If one party, being in power, would constrain the other against their conscience and judgment, the schism is certainly on the side of the imposers.”

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the christian profession ; (6) those, who have crucified

The question is, in such a case what ought the oppressed to do? Let us take an *article of faith*, and a *rule of practice*, and see. "When a heathen child is baptized, he is changed within. He is brought to the font full of sin through Adam's disobedience: but he is washed from all his sins inwardly. The power of the holy Ghost by the priest's blessing comes upon the corruptible water of the holy font, and after that it can wash both body and soul from all sins by spiritual power." This is part of an Easter-homily, which was read annually in the church about 800 years ago. This I call an *article of faith*. *Ab. Whelock. Bedæ Hist. Eccl. Cantab. 1644. p. 471.*

Here follows a *rule of practice*. At the elevation of the host, the ritualists require the worshippers of it to say—"Soul of Christ, sanctify me—Body of Christ, save me—Blood of Christ, inebriate me—Water of Christ's side, wash me." This is part of a form for adoring the holy sacrament, published in the *hours of Salisbury*. This I call a *rule of practice*.

I can suppose this article, and this rule, to be simply proposed to me by a clergyman of the church of Rome. The first I do not understand, the last I do not approve, both deviate from my rule of

faith and practice, the holy scriptures. I, therefore, thank him for his friendly regard to my spiritual welfare, and we part civilly.

I can suppose them laid before me by Pope John XXII, along with a parchment grant duly executed of three thousand days pardon for deadly sins, on condition of my complying. Again, I thank his holiness for an offer so generous: but I must beg leave to decline accepting it, and we part.

I can suppose them laid before me with all the religious inducements to accept them, that arise from an interest in the papal community, such as, on one side, the benefits of pardons, supererogations, indulgencies, jubilees, canonization, and so on: and, on the other, the terrors of annual excommunication, denial of extreme unction, desertion in purgatory, and damnation in hell. I can conceive myself unawed by all these, and acting rightly to persist in judging for myself.

I can go a step farther, and suppose my worthy friend the pope, finding me inconvertible by motives taken from his principles, changing his mode of persuasion, and pretending to convert me by motives taken according to my own principles from scripture. He says, Jesus Christ



cified your Saviour, and every day strive to destroy his gospel.

Christ has put the government of my conscience into his hand, and required me to believe what he affirms to be true, and to perform what he commands to be done. He reads, and I reason, till, at length, resenting his usurpation of Christ's authority, I set my S. Paul's epistles against his S. Peter's keys, and conform to the apostle by *dissenting* from the pope. *If any man teach otherwise than the apostles taught, and consent not to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, from such WITHDRAW thyself.* 1 Tim. vi. 3, 5. If there be *two or three* of us in the same circumstances, we *congregate in Christ's name*, and, wherever be the place of our assembling, we expect to have him by his word and spirit *in the midst* of us.

All this is an affair of religion, conscience, reason, argument, on both sides *purely ecclesiastical*. But should my brother John turn politician, intrigue at court, delude my king and persuade him to confiscate my goods, to confine my person, and to condemn me to death for my nonconformity to his nostrums, in such a case the doctrines of *passive obedience*, and *non-resistance* in matters of religion would come under consideration. The state of the question concerning my believing what I do not understand, and my

performing what I do not approve, would not be altered by being put into new hands, it would remain exactly as before, and what was my duty before would be my duty still. But what should I do with these new doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance? I would open my eyes, see the artifice of my opponent, affirm that they *are*, and they are *not* theological questions. As *theological* questions, they are reprobated by every article of christianity; for in matters of faith and obedience we owe *belief* to none but *revealed* propositions, and *obedience* to none but *divine* commands. But these doctrines, as they regard life, civil liberty, and property, are not theological, but *political* questions, they belong to systems of civil polity, and as they have no place in that system of government, under which I live, for that considers the people as the origin of power, and civil governors as the executors of a trust, so I reject them. In such a free state I choose to live, agreeably to my notions of civil government, the genius of my liberal religion, and the examples of the best of politicians, *I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts. I will speak of thy testimonies before kings, and will not be ashamed.* Psal. cxix. 45, 46.

## XII.

## CONSIDER THE PRINCIPLES OF A WORD OR ACTION. (8)

For example. John v. 14. *Behold! thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worst thing come unto thee.* This was the language of Jesus Christ to the

(8) *Consider the principles of words and actions.* The doctrine of principles is extremely important to a christian minister, particularly in *five* cases. I must mention only five here for want of room.

1. In studying the *letter* of scripture, that is the nature, and principles of constructing, and composing, which prevailed with each writer in each composition. Nothing is more common among divines than arbitrary distributions of texts, chapters, and whole books, according to their *own* scholastical notions of composition. These always imply, that the writers of these books, chapters, and verses composed on the principles of their expositors. Nothing can be less true. Our Milton has rightly said, "It is not for the majesty of scripture to humble *herself* (Milton was a poet remember.) in artificial *theorems*, and *definitions*, and *corollaries*, like a professor in the schools: but looks to be *analysed* into those sciential rules, which are the implements of in-

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struction." That is to say, we must *follow* scripture, and not *force* it. *Tetrachordon*, p. 23.

For example. A certain expositor of Ecclesiastes prefixes what he calls *Diagramma doctrinæ*, and lays Solomon out in scholastick form. "His design is to treat of the chief good—In order to this he shews in the first place *negatively* what felicity is not. It does not consist in human science, in sensual pleasure, in moral virtue, &c."—to this part our expositor assigns the first four chapters.—"Secondly, He shews *positively* wherein felicity does consist. Chap. v. 6. xii. 13.—Thirdly, The *use* of the doctrine, from the ninth verse of the fifth chapter to the twelfth verse of the sixth—and from the ninth verse of the seventh chapter to the end." *Joan. Serrani in Eccles. Sol. Commentarii Præf.*

We do not deny the doctrine of this expositor: we only affirm, Solomon did not compose the book of Ecclesiastes in this scholastick *method*.

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the man, whom he had just before healed of an infirmity of thirty-eight years standing. Him Jesus now found in the temple. It is not imaginable,

*rhod.* The expositor, indeed, brings detached verses together, and so makes up his method: but this displays his own genius, not that of the author. This book, it is plain, is a *dialogue* between a libertine and a moral philosopher, and this notion of the composition of the book half expounds it. Grammarians, Rhetoricians, and Poets, as well as Logicians, have served scripture thus.

2. The doctrine of principles is important in regard to the *sense* of scripture. Creeds, and articles lay down the principles of their *compilers*, of which, perhaps, the biblical writers never heard; yet these are the principles, which teachers are sworn to find, or to profess to find in all the writings of inspired men, and NO OTHER, *under pain of our displeasure!* This is the crime of whole communities, and individuals frequently imitate them. Thus a certain writer against pre-existence, in answer to the argument, that the pre-existence of human souls was not incompatible with the *goodness* of God: but highly *agreeable* to our notions of it, affirms, "God does not always do what is best; for his goodness is sub-

ordinate to his will, his actions are not necessary: but arbitrary. It would have been *best* for Christ to have come into the world immediately after the fall. It would have been *best* for the world to have been created sooner. It would be *best* for the wicked not to go to hell. But all these events are as they are; because God willed they should be." What a presumptuous *master of arts* is this! To use his own words, "he confirms a *vafrous* doctrine by *facons* reasons, which, like sure *fulciments*, shore up its *ruent* credit." According to this genius, it is *best* for a wise man to believe what a fool thinks *best* to affirm. See vol. I. p. 266, &c. note. *No Præ-existence.* By E. W. A. M. London, 1667. chap. 2.

3. The doctrine of principles is of great consequence in *church-government*. Civil government has for its object civil liberty, and a just civil government takes no cognizance of mere principles. See vol. I. p. 247, note 7. Suppose a man living under a monarchical government, and believing at the same time, that a republican form of government is more perfect than that of a monarchy, this be-

liefs



nable, that this meeting was fortuitous, and unforeseen to Jesus Christ. His providence, no doubt, conducted the man that way, directed him to the temple, whither he went himself to seek him. Examine, then, upon what *principles* Jesus Christ went to seek this miserable sinner, and you will find, 1. He went in great *love* to the poor man. He went in that same benevolence, which inclined him to do good to all, who had need, and in every place, that he honoured with his presence. Jesus was, as it were, a publick source of benefits,  
his

lief would not render him guilty in the eye of the law. Indeed were he to perform any overt acts disturbing the peace of society, and tending to subvert the monarchy, under which he lived, he would become guilty, and his doing so from principles would aggravate his guilt. Milton thought,—that “*mutual affection* was the essence of a matrimonial contract—that, where the essence was wanting, the form, the *contract*, was dissolved, and the parties might separate and marry again.” He did more, he published, and republished on this article, yet, as he did not reduce his principles to practice, he was not accounted reprehensible in the eye of the law.

Church-government runs on very erroneous principles in this point of light. In some churches members are admitted in infancy *without* any religious principles, and

the promise of a sponsor, that the child shall have principles in mature age, is accepted in lieu of them. In other church-governments metaphysical principles concerning free-will, decrees, and so on, are made *terms* of communion. In the primitive church, profession of faith in Christ, accredited by a holy life, was accounted a sufficient title to membership. The ignorant and wicked, desiring to become wise and good, were admitted to a catechumen-state, from which, after they had been instructed in the principles of christianity, they proceeded to baptism and church-fellowship. Were this primitive practice revived, and put in the place of what is usually called speaking an experience, or were it made preparatory to it, great good would probably follow. A congregation divided into three classes, consisting the  
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his hands every where bestowed beneficent gifts, and he even sought occasions, when they did not present themselves. 2. He went by an engagement of *ancient* love, which he had made for this paralytick; his second favour flowed from his first, nor would he leave his work imperfect. Thus it is said, in regard to his disciples, *having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them to the end.* The bounty of Jesus Christ resembles that of his eternal father, who calls, justifies, and in the end glorifies those, whom he first predestinated;

one of the *church* properly—the second of *catechumens* preparing for church-fellowship—and the third of *children* to be catechized—would not be ill-governed.

4. Principles are of consequence in *preaching*. Thus one divine rants. “The tenth book of *Aristotle’s* ethicks, though he did not intend it, contains a *full*, and *perfect* paraphrase, or comment upon the first psalm—*Homer* may confirm the *antiquity*, and in some degree the *truth*, and the *right understanding* of the holy scriptures—God was pleased to make use of the incomparable wit of *Virgil* to celebrate the coming of *our Saviour*—The *ancient mythology* was derived from scripture, confirms scripture, and cannot be *dismissed* without some wrong to scripture.” What preaching are we to expect from men adopting such principles as these! Some divines fall seriously

and deeply into these dreams, *toil all night, and catch nothing*, paddle backward and forward from *Homer* to *Moses*, and from *Moses* to *Hesiod*, from *Jerusalem* to *Babylon*, and *Egypt*, and *Rome*, to pattern a proverb, or match a meaning, and all on what principles? Why, forsooth! the language, customs, and sentiments of the biblical writers are so far to be *admired*, yea so far to be *credited*, as they agree with these supreme models of learning, and sentiment, and taste! *The prophet, that hath a dream, let him tell it as a dream: but he, that hath my word, let him speak my word as it is. Is not my word like fire?* Jer. xxiii. 28, 29. Truth, like fire, has properties of its own; neither need pause for a pattern from the truth and the fire of Greece. See *Meric Casaubon’s Letter to Dr. Peter Du Moulin*, 1669.

5. Principles of religion  
are

nated ; and on this as on one of the principal foundations, S. Paul establisheth our hope for the future, *God, having begun a good work in us, will perform it to the day of Christ* : and elsewhere, *God is faithful, who hath called you to the fellowship of his son*. 3. It was by a principle of *wisdom* and foreknowledge, that Jesus Christ sought this paralytick patient in the temple, in order to teach him his duty, to furnish him with the means of doing it, and to give him a more particular knowledge of the friend, who had healed him ; for he well knew, that a tender faith, such as that of this man was, had need of fresh and continual aid, as a young plant needs a prop to support it against winds and storms.

In like manner, if you had to examine these words of Jesus Christ to the Samaritan woman, *Go and call thy husband*, John iv. You might  
ex-

are essential to the *minister* of Christ. All churches act as if they thought an unprincipled minister a cure to his people, therefore all require real or pretended principles. A candidate for orders in the established church is obliged to profess, that he is *moved by the holy Ghost* to take orders ; and, if he aspire to be a bishop, he is obliged to profess, that he does not aspire to that honour, *Nolo Episcopari*. Among the protestant-dissenters a confession of faith is usually required at ordination, that is, a profession of the minister's own religious principles is required. Our old divines sup-

posed principles of *four* sorts necessary to a minister. " 1. *Personal* principles for the government of *himself*—2. *Domestick* principles for the management of his *family*—3. *Political* principles for the regulation of his conduct toward those, who were *without*—And lastly, *Official* principles for the execution of his *ministry*." The first are cognizable by *God*, the second by his *family*, the third by *government*, and his *neighbours*, the last by the *church*, over which by their own choice he ought to be appointed overseer, inspector, or bishop. Vid. *Nichol. Hemmingii Pastor. ad init.*



examine the intention of Jesus Christ in this expression. (9) He did not speak thus, because he was ignorant what sort of a life this woman lived. He knew that, to speak properly, she had no husband.

(9) *Consider the intention of Jesus Christ.* Jesus Christ often spoke obscurely to his disciples, and in parables. His intention in speaking so was the most wise and benevolent, that could be imagined. Had he only designed to inform his disciples of truths, he would have delivered his sentiments in the plainest manner: but he intended to exercise their minds, to form in them a habit of thinking, reflecting, and reasoning, and so to endear truths to them by giving them the pleasure of discovering them. *Lazareth our friend slecpeth—Destroy this temple—Ye shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes, &c.* Exemplum autem de templo restaurando, et de duodecim sedibus apostolorum ea intentione a Christo prolatum est, ut desiderium discendi, ac studium de non intellectis inquirendi, et interrogandi accenderet. Ziegleri in Grotii de jure bel. et pac. libros animadversiones. lib. iii. cap. 1.

It is a well known maxim of lawyers, *Prior et potentior est mens quam vox dicentis*; and divines early adopted it as a rule of investigating scripture. Nicholas de Lyra (*ad cap. xviii. Deuteron.*) quotes,

as a maxim of Hilary, this axiom, *Intelligentia dictorum ex causis sumenda est dicentis*, that is, from his scope, design, or intention. S. Augustine enlarges on this article in the fifth and tenth chapters of the third book de doct. Christian. The writers of scripture had, strictly speaking, only one primary principal meaning in what they wrote, and this we call the literal sense, *sensum literalem esse*, says Aquinas, quem autor *præcipue* intendit. Papal divines, schoolmen, and many protestants think, there is a double meaning, more properly a twofold sense in scripture, a literal and a mystical meaning, and this last they divide into *Allegorical—Tropological—and Anagogical*. When a literal sense is transferred to morals, it is called Tropological, as *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox, when he treadeth out the corn.* Deut. xxv. 4. transferred by S. Paul to the support of ministers. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10. A transfer is *anagogical*, when it regards eternal life. Some divines think, these distinctions futile, and call them allegory, concerning which they direct. 1. Let your allegory have scripture authority. 2. Content your-

husband. It was then, 1. A word of *trial*; for the Lord said this to give her an opportunity of making a free confession, *I have no husband*. 2. It was also a word of *kind reproof*; for he intended to convince her of the sin in which she lived. 3. It was also a word of *grace*; for the censure tended to the woman's consolation. 4. It was farther, a word of *wisdom*; for our Lord intended to take occasion

yourself with such an *application*, as scripture makes of it. Allegories *prove* nothing. *Theologia symbolica non est argumentativa*. Aquin. apud Keckerman. *Rhet. lib. i. cap. 7. 3.*

*Intention* is of the utmost importance in *casuistry*, or conscience-law. An excellent critick observes—that “*γραμμα* and *πνευμα* stand distinguished in scripture from each other—that the first is confined to the grammatical, or *literal* sense of the law, and the last is put for the *mind* and intention of the lawgiver—that Aristotle often uses *γραμματα* for written laws in opposition to the will of the governor—that he calls it a foolish thing for a governor to follow strictly a written law—*De Repub. lib. iii. 15.*—that Cicero also opposes the letter of the law against the intention of the law-maker. *De Invent. i. 38*—that law speaks of things in general terms, without accommodating them to particular cases, &c.” *Le Clerc. Sup. to Ham. Mat. v. 17.*

The intention of the speaker is also of great consequence in obtaining the true sense of proverbial expressions—general observations—&c. &c. For example.

Prov. xviii. 22. *Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing*. Whoso findeth a wife—*prudent—chaste* wife, findeth a blessing, indeed: but if a wife possess contrary qualities, the finder, I fancy, will not think her a good thing, although prudence may keep him from saying so.

Psalms lv. 23. *Deceitful men shall not live out half their days*; that is, some deceitful men shall not.

cxxviii. 3. *The wife of the man, who seareth the Lord, shall be as a fruitful vine, and his children like olive-plants*. That is, temperance and chastity generally produce population.

xxxvii. 25. *I, who am old, never saw the seed of the righteous begging bread*. It is not common to see industrious families, who also are beloved, and therefore assisted by the cha-

occasion at this meeting to discover himself to her; and more clearly to convince her, that he had a perfect knowledge of all the secrets of her life, as he presently proved by saying, *thou hast well said, I have no husband, for thou hast had five husbands, and he, whom thou now hast, is not thy husband.* (1)

Were

charitable, reduced to beggary.

Prov. xxii. 6. *Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.* Pious principles instilled in youth seldom fail of operating in old age.

1 Cor. x. 33. *I strive to please all the men, of whom I have been speaking, in all lawful, and expedient things.* Gal. i. 10. *If I pleased men by preaching another gospel, I should not be the servant of Christ.*

(1) *Woman of Samaria.* Bishop Massillon has a sermon on delaying conversion, from the same passage. Mr. C. speaks of the principles of Christ's words to the woman. The bishop treats of the woman's principles in her answers. "I remark (says he) three principal excuses, which she makes use of to avoid accepting the merciful offers of Jesus Christ. 1. An excuse of station, or condition. She is a woman of Samaria, and therefore forbidden to grant what the Saviour asked of her, *how is it that thou - -*

*askest water of me, who am a woman of Samaria?* 2. An excuse on account of the difficulty; *the well is deep, and there is nothing to draw with.* Finally, an excuse on account of the great variety of opinions, which made it doubtful whether she should worship with her fathers in that mountain, or, as the Jews said, at Jerusalem. Let us hear ourselves in this woman. The excuses, which she opposes against the grace of Jesus Christ, are such as we every day oppose against it. We pretend to find in our stations of life reasons for a worldly conduct. We can form excuses concerning difficulty, for we frame an impracticable idea of virtue. In fine, we find in pretended uncertainties, and contradictions concerning doctrines, and rules of life, motives of security, which calm our consciences in the commission of the most manifest crimes. Let us confound these three excuses by opening the history of our gospel." *Mass. Ser. Careme, tom. iii. S. troisieme.*



Were you going to explain the ninth verse of the first of Acts, where it is said, *When Jesus was taken up, his disciples beheld him*, it would be proper to remark the sentiments of the disciples in that moment, and to shew from what principles proceeded that attentive and earnest looking after their divine master, while he ascended to heaven. (2)

(2) *The apostles looked after Jesus with lively sentiments.*  
 Βουλει μαθειν, οτι και μελλοντες  
 ὄραναι τον αναβαινοντα, εχαιρον  
 και εσκιρτων; ακουσον τε χριστ  
 λεγοντος, οτι ανεβαινον και κα-  
 τεβαινον συνεχως. τουτο δε επι-  
 θυμουντων εσιν ιδειν το παρα-  
 δοξον θεαμα. και ποθεν δηλον,  
 οτι ανεβαινον και κατεβαινον;  
 αυτου ακουσον λεγοντες· Απαρτι  
 οψεσθε τους ουρανους ανευωγμενους,  
 και της αγελης τε θεου ανα-  
 βαινοντας και καταβαινοντας  
 επι τον υιον τε ανθρωπου· τοιου-  
 τον γαρ των ερωντων το εδος·  
 ουδε τον καιρον αναμενουσιν,  
 αλλα προλαμβανουσιν την προ-  
 θεσμιαν τη ηδονη. δια τχτο κα-  
 ταβαινουσιν επειγομενοι το καινον  
 και παραδοξον ενεينو ιδειν θεαμα,  
 ανθρωπον εν ουρανω φανεντα·  
 δια τχτο πανταχου αγγελοι,  
 και οτε ετικτετο, και οτε  
 ανισατο, και σημερον οτε ανεβη·

ιδου γαρ δυο (φησιν) εν εσθητι  
 λαμπρα δια του σχηματος την  
 ηδονην δηλουντες. &c. John i.  
 51. Act. i. 10. *Chryost. orat:*  
*in ascensionem D. N. I. C. tom.*  
*v. orat. 87.*

Interpreters have been greatly embarrassed in reconciling what S. Luke says xxiv. 50. *Jesus led his disciples out as far as to Bethany*, with what the same S. Luke says, Acts i. 12. *The apostles returned from mount Olivet*. But Olivet, says Mr. De Beaufobre, was situated between Bethphage and Bethany, and our Lord ascended from that part of the mountain, which lay next Bethany, so that there is no contradiction in the Evangelist's accounts, for they mean the same place. See *Selden de jur. Nat. et Gent. and Basnage Annal. Polit. Eccl.*

## XIII.

## CONSIDER CONSEQUENCES. (3)

Thus, when you explain the doctrine of God's mercy, it is expedient (at least sometimes.) to remark

(3) *Observe consequences.* By this method Silvanus, an ancient abbot of a monastery, convinced a travelling monk of his erroneous notions of two passages of holy scripture. The story is this. "Παραλε τις αδελφος τω Αββα Σιλουανω, &c. A certain brother came to the convent at mount Sinai, and, finding the monks all at work, shook his head, and said to the abbot, *Labour not for the meat, that perisheth.* [John vi. 27.] *Mary chose the good part.* [Luke x. 42.] Zachary, said the old abbot to his servant, give the brother a book, and shew him into a cell. There sat the monk alone all day long. At night, wondering that nobody had called him to dinner, he goes to the abbot. Father, says he, don't the brethren eat to day? O yes, replied the abbot, they have eaten plentifully. And why, added the monk, did you not call me? Because, brother, replied the abbot, you are a spiritual man, and have no need of carnal food. For our parts, God help us! we are carnal, we are obliged to

eat, and therefore we work: but you, brother! you have *chosen the good part*, you sit and read all day long, and are above the want of *meat, that perisheth.* Pardon me, father, I perceive my mistake. I do, subjoined the old man: but remember, Martha is as necessary a christian as Mary." *Apotheg. patrum. in Cotelerii Ecclesiæ Græcæ monument. tom. i.*

Reasoning by illation, induction, and consequences, is a fair method of arguing: but it requires the utmost caution to reason accurately in this way. All inferences have some evidence, or no evidence, some probability, or no probability, a slight presumption, or a clear demonstration according to the falsehood, inanity, probability, or certainty of *all* the premises, from which they are drawn. Thus an inference drawn from many presumptive premises may have a high degree of moral certainty, the inference containing in one aggregate sum *all* the evidence of the presumptive premises, from which it is drawn, *put together.*

mark the *good* and lawful uses, which we ought to make of it. These uses are to renounce ourselves

*gether*. Inference thus resembles the income of a lord of a manor; for his fortune is the aggregate of many small farms and quit-rents paid by a great number of poor copyholders, and tenants; or, it resembles the clear call of a minister to the pastoral office made up of a large majority of separate votes.

“ Probable evidence, says one of our best reasoning-divines, is essentially distinguished from demonstrative by this, that it admits of degrees; and of all variety of them, from the highest moral certainty to the very lowest presumption - - That the slightest possible presumption is of the nature of a probability, appears from hence; that such low presumption often repeated will amount even to moral certainty - - In questions of difficulty, or such as are thought so, where more satisfactory evidence cannot be had, or is not seen; if the result of examination be, that there appears upon the whole, any the lowest presumption on one side, and none on the other, or a greater presumption on one side, though in the lowest degree greater; this determines the question, even in matters of speculation, and, in matters of practice, will lay us

under an absolute and formal obligation, in point of prudence and of interest, to act upon that presumption or low probability, though it be so low as to leave the mind in very great doubt which is the truth.” *Bp. Butler’s Analogy. Introduction.*

Dr. Watts gives an example of inductive reasoning. “ The doctrine of the Socinians cannot be proved from the gospels, it cannot be proved from the Acts of the apostles, it cannot be proved from the epistles, nor the book of revelations, *therefore* it cannot be proved from the new testament.” The Socinians deny the conclusion by disputing the premises. The Dr. adds, “ This sort of argument is often defective, because there is not due care taken to *enumerate* all the particulars on which the conclusion should depend,” and, may we not add, because the particulars enumerated are not sufficiently *ascertained*? *Logick, iii. 2, 7.*

Here are *three* remarkable modern instances, mentioned in a book now before me, which the learned author did me the honour of sending as a present (a most valuable one it is) a few days ago. “ The subversion of freedom was the evident purpose of Mr. Hume in writing *the history of England*.



selves—to be sensible of our infinite obligations to God, who pardons so many sins with so much bounty

*land.*—I fear we may with too much justice affirm the subversion of christianity to be the object of Mr. Gibbon in writing *the history of the decline and fall of the Roman empire.*

—Mr. Lindsey affirms, that the fathers of the first three centuries, and consequently all christian people for upward of three hundred years after Christ till the council of Nice, were generally unitarians.” These are bold attempts. By what means do these gentlemen intend to establish their theses, and effect their ends? A little subversion does all. Instead of beginning by ascertaining facts, and then proceeding to deduce fair inferences, begin by assuming an inference, and then accommodate facts to your assumption, and your work will be done. Hear our excellent author.

“Whatever occurs in the ancient writers of history of a speculative nature, we find to be an inference from a fact stated, without any seeming view to the deduction, but to the unadulterated representation of which the historian appears to have religiously attended. Whatever occurs in modern writers of history of a narrative nature, we find to be an inference from a system previously assumed,

without any seeming view to the truth of the facts recorded, but to the establishment of which the historian appears, through every species of misrepresentation, to have zealously directed his force.” This is a golden remark, and of infinite use in theological controversy, as the writer of this decisive refutation of Mr. Lindsey has most fully shewn. *Inquiry into the belief of the Christians of the first three Centuries, respecting the one Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* By William Burgh, Esq.

Natural consequences are very beautiful. John viii. 14. *Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true.*—42. *If God were your father, ye would love me.*—46. *If I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?*—ix. 16. *How can a man, that is a sinner, do such miracles?*—33. *If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.*—Heb. ii. 2, 3. *If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression received a just reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect a salvation spoken by the Lord, &c. &c.*

“If true religion lie much in the *affections*, such means are to be desired as have much of a tendency to move the affections. Such books, and such a way of preaching  
the

bounty—to consecrate ourselves entirely to his service, as persons over whom he has acquired a new right—and to labour incessantly for his glory in gratitude for what he has done for our salvation. (4)

You

the word, and administration of ordinances, and such a way of worshipping God in prayer, and singing praises, is much to be desired, as has a tendency deeply to affect the hearts of those who attend the means." *Dr. Jonathan Edwards on Religious Affections*, p. 1.

Natural consequence and lawful assumption may be joined. Thus, one of our most respectable divines, narrating the state of the non-conformists in the reign of Charles II. and bestowing duly merited praise on their extensive labours, adds,—

(*Consequential Reasoning.*)

"If they through many a sharp inclement blast  
The painful period of their labours pass'd,  
Shall we relax our toils, when peace profound  
Reigns all abroad, and sunbeams blaze around?"

(*Assumptive Reasoning.*)

But should we (for who knows what storms may rise,  
What sudden thunders shake both earth and skies?)  
Be try'd like these confessors, let us dare  
The fiercest wrath and heaviest doom to bear;  
For Christ, for conscience wealth and ease resign,  
No frowns, no terrors in their cause decline."

This, as all the other publications of this truly worthy servant of God, is the language of a fair reasoner and an upright man. *Dr. Gibbons in Mr. Palmer's Edit. of Calamy.*

(4) *The doctrine of God's mercy.* A dictionary compiled on accurate principles would affix a great number of distinct ideas to each term, and would inform us, this is the *literal* sense of a term, that is the *metonymical* sense of it, this is the *popular* mean-

ing of a word, that is the *theological, juridical* sense of it, and so on. How often has Littleton's Latin dictionary led boys at school into bad Latin and English! For example. "*Misericors*—merciful, pitiful, compassionate, tender-hearted. *Mitis*, manfuetus. *Cicero*." *Homuncio misericors* would be a very *pitiful* fellow, and a *Tuscan Lady* would be a very *unmerciful* vixen, although she were *Mauris mitior anguibus*. (See Horat. Ode x. L. iii.)

You may also observe the false and *pernicious* consequences, which ungrateful and wicked men, who sin that grace may abound, pretend to derive from this doctrine. They say, we are no longer  
to

I do not blame the dictionary above-mentioned, it is a good one; nor do I wish to see one compiled on these principles, for it would consist of too many folios to lie within my reach. I only mean to remind a student of divinity—that words are necessarily vague and equivocal—that dictionaries and lexicons are precarious helps—that each student of an art or science should acquaint himself with that sense of terms, which belongs to *his own* profession, lest he should fall into such a mistake as that divine did, who published a book to prove the late doctor Gill worse than an Arminian, because he had affirmed, “a man is to be *justified* for renouncing infant-baptism.” The Dr. used the word in its *popular* sense, the zealot took it in a *theological* sense, and said the Dr. held *justification* not by *good* works: but by that *wicked* work immersion. Ergo Dr. Gill was an Antinomian. The same person published another book to prove Dr. Watts, and Dr. Doddridge dangerous innovators, and heterodox divines for presuming to say, “Dr.

Watts’s psalms and hymns *animated* christian worship,” for lo! Bailey’s dictionary says, to animate is to *enliven* or *quicken*, now who can *give* life, and *quicken* a dead soul but Jesus Christ? See beloved, the second of Ephesians, and verse the first!

To return, our best dictionaries are necessarily vague, “*Mercy*, says Dr. Johnson, tenderness; goodness; pity; willingness to spare and save; clemency; mildness; unwillingness to punish; pardon; discretion.” Here this laborious and accurate compiler is obliged to leave the word in a general meaning, illustrated by a few pertinent examples.

Divines distinguish the *mercy* of God from his *love*. “*God, who is rich in MERCY, for his great LOVE, where-with he loved us, quickened us with Christ.* Eph. ii. 4, 5. The causes of our salvation are mercy and love. I shall give you the distinction between mercy and love. The object of love is the *creature* simply, the object of mercy is the creature fallen into *misery*. Parents love their children: but if they be fallen into misery love works in a  
way



to consider justice now we are under grace, the more we sin the more God will be glorified in pardoning us—this mercy will endure all the time of our lives, and therefore it will be enough to apply to it at the hour of death—with many more such false consequences, which must be both clearly stated, and fully refuted. (5)

It

way of pity.” &c. Dr. Goodwin, tom. i. ser. x. Eph. ii. 5, &c.

Agreeably to this notion, mercy, when put for the love of God, signifies *undeserved* love, and by a figurative tour it may signify *pardon* to the guilty. Luke xviii. 13. God be *merciful* to me a sinner! “I cry you *mercy* for suspecting a friar.” i. e. I beg pardon. Dryden.—By another tour it may signify *pity* to one in *distress*, without the idea of demerit. Happy is he, that hath *mercy* on the poor. Prov. xiv. 21.—By another tour it may signify *discretion*. I lie at your *mercy*. Thy *mercy*, O Lord! is in the heavens. Psal. xxxvi. 5. Vague as the term is, and more proofs that it is so I need not adduce, it has given occasion to much controversy, which probably would be diminished, if not entirely superseded by a definition of terms. The doctrine of mercy, in Mr. Claude’s sense, is that account of the display of the love of God in redemption, which the Calvinistick system of divinity

gives. This subject is largely discussed by Dr. Goodwin, vol. v. part ii. *Evangelical, or Gospel-holiness*.

(5) *State and refute false consequences drawn from the doctrine of divine mercy.* On what occasions it is proper to do so Mr. Claude will shew presently. Here we only observe, that false consequences deserve different treatment according to the different sources, from which they proceed. If *malice* affix consequences to any doctrine, without the least regard to truth, and with a malevolent design of aspersing those, who believe it, a good man would not go beyond the demerit of such a slanderer were he to imitate a Jesuit, mentioned by Dr. Owen, who fully answered his opponent by only writing at the end of each of his detaching periods, *mentiris impudentissime*. If honest inquisitive *ignorance* infer false conclusions, it will be necessary at least to try to inform such well-meaning persons, as may be possessed with it. If we have given occasion by *abstruse language*,  
by

It is much the same with the doctrine of the efficacious grace of the holy Ghost in our conversion, for the just and lawful consequences, which are drawn from it are, 1. That such is the greatness of our depravity, it can be rectified only by almighty aid—2. That we should be humble, because there is nothing good in us—3. That we should ascribe all the glory of our salvation to God, who is the only author of it—4. That we must adore the depths of the great mercy of our God, who freely gave his holy spirit to convert us. (6)

You

by odd associations of ideas, by violent tempers, or by innocent circumstances, for false consequences, it will be glorious to retract, and amend. It would be easy to exemplify all these: but the last only shall be attended to now, in an example from Dr. Goodwin.

“God hath laid up proportions of mercy for the wicked as a stock, which when [*being*] spent, they are broken, ’tis not so with the godly.” A circumstance unfavourable to this proposition is, it is put in the *index* of a folio volume, and officially ought to contain the substance of what is advanced in the page, to which it refers. The proposition, as it stands here, is incomplete, partial, exceptionable, and open to many false consequences. Yet none of these seeming inferences ought to be drawn from it, because

the Dr. so explains himself in the *whole* place referred to as to preclude them. Suppose a preacher to utter such an unguarded sentence in a sermon, and to leave it unexplained, could he blame auditors for inferring strange consequences? I trow not! *Goodwin on Eph. ii. 5. vol. i.*

(6) *Efficacious grace.* Our author has explained himself before, vol. i. p. 106. and following pages, to which we have added a few thoughts page 108, note 3.

The nature and operation of that divine power, which is essentially necessary to salvation under the name of *grace*, has ever been a subject of controversy among divines; and, when peace is preserved, the controversy is edifying. Let penalties and censures, and evil dispositions withdraw, and controversy may become a privilege to christians. These, and not  
mere

You must remark at the same time the abuses, and false consequences, which insidious sophisters draw from this doctrine, as that, since the conversion of men is by the almighty power of God, it is needless to preach his word; and to address to them on God's part exhortations, promises, and threatnings—that it is in vain to tell a sinner, it is his duty to turn to God, as without efficacious grace (which does not depend upon the sinner) he cannot do it—that it has a tendency to make men negligent about their salvation to tell them,  
it

mere speculative mistakes, have done all the mischief. In the fifth century, S. Augustine and Pelagius disputed this doctrine. Cassian the monk, the father of the Semipelagians, struck out a middle way, and each had abundance of followers. In the ninth century the subject was controverted again. On the Augustinian side were Godeschalcus, Ratramn, Prudentius, Lupus, Florus, Remi; and on the opposite side of the question were Rabanus, Hincmar, Amalarius, John Scôtus, and others. The dispute produced several councils, and many scandalous consequences. In the sixteenth century the zeal of Michael Baius, a doctor in the university of Louvain, started this subject again. Dr. Baius, whose oracle was S. Augustine, was followed by the Dominicans, Augustines, Jansenists, and others; the Jesuits and the popes took

the opposite side. Controversies on this subject produced no very remarkable confusions in the reformed churches till the seventeenth century. Then the subject was started again, Arminius and Gomar took different sides, divines divided with them, sublapsarianism and supralapsarianism, freewill and freegrace were debated, and in 1618 decided, as councils decide, in the synod of Dort. The synod enacted what they pleased, and people continued to think as they thought before.

It should seem, all disputants on this, and on the other subjects connected with it, may be arranged in three classes. In the first we place those, who *deny* the whole Calvinistick system, (so we may venture to call it now.) concerning grace and decrees. In a second we put those, who admit, affirm, and attempt to *explain* this  
U system



It does not depend on their power. These, and such like abuses, must be proposed and solidly refuted. (7)

Moreover,

system in *all* its parts, and to reconcile the whole to the received notions of the lowest capacities. In a third we place those, who take a cool medium by affirming at the same time God's *free grace* and man's *free agency*, as both declared in scripture, and by considering the conciliation of them as a *mystery* incomprehensible to us, and not necessary to be perfectly understood in our present state. The last class were called in the sixteenth century *Synergists*. Melancthon struck out this plan, Strigelius, George Major, Paul Eber, and others pursued it, and numbers have followed them. See *Bayle Synergists*. *Mosheim Cent.* xvi. S. iii. *part ii.* vol. iv.

(7) *Refute the fallacious reasonings of insidious sophisters.* Many have taken the liberty to attribute consequences to doctrines, which they, who taught them, never drew. One of our old divines complains of this. "Godliness, under the suspicion of being a spy, is every where stopped, examined, yea and sometimes whipt out of town for a runagate. Like Sampson, it has been brought upon Stages, which are often the Devils pulpits, to make sport

for Philistines; yea it has been set up as a mark to be shot at out of God's place, the pulpit, and puritanism set up as a stalking-horse to stand behind, while they shoot through the loyns of it." *Dr. Goodwin's Sermon on Zeph. ii.* 1, 2, 3.

This practice is not yet obsolete; for of late the doctrine of regeneration, held by all Christians, has been disguised, and ridiculed on the stage in a senseless thing, called the Minor, by Foote. Here buffoonery is in character: but how easily could I exemplify it from caricature sermons preached in christian congregations, and printed for the publick edification - - by A - - - and B - - - and C - - and so on to the end of the alphabet?

I am sorry to be obliged to add, some very good men, and worthy ministers of Christ, in other respects, have repeatedly affirmed, that ministers ought not to exhort sinners to believe and repent evangelically. What was some few years ago called *the modern question* met with more discussion than such a question deserved. That whole controversy lay in a confusion of ideas, a misconstruction of terms, and a violent

Moreover, this method must be taken, when you have occasion to treat of the doctrines of election and reprobation—the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ's blood—and, in general, almost all religious subjects require it; for there is not one of them all, which is not subject to use and abuse. Take care, however, when you propose these good and bad consequences, that you do it properly, and when an occasion naturally presents itself; for were they introduced with any kind of affectation and force, it must be disagreeable. (8)

violent attachment to single words, and unconnected sentences of scripture. See vol. i. page 193. note 5.

(8) *Do not introduce confutations without necessity.* The six following canons are laid down by Urſin, Zepper, and Keckerman. “ 1. Labour more to confirm truth, than to suppress error, and never refute errors, except when your text requires you to do so.—2. Let obsolete errors alone.—3. Derive your confirmations and refutations from your text.—4. Expose those modern errors only, from which your auditors are in danger.—5. Refute errors in a tranquil, placid manner, free from all violence and bitterness, and so convince your auditors that you aim to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of your people.—6. Refute the principal errors of opponents: but do not aim to discuss them all.” *Keckerman. Rhet. Eccl. lib. i. cap. 9.*

(9) *Prevent bad consequences.* I wish I had room to translate an example or two from Monsieur Saurin; in abridging, I am aware how much I disguise him: but necessity has no law! In a sermon on Hof. xiii. 9. *O Israel thou hast destroyed thyself*, he undertakes to prove that the destruction of every sinner proceeds from himself. As Mr. S. believed the same doctrines, that Mr. Claude held, it was necessary for him to extricate his doctrine from such difficulties, as are supposed to follow the doctrine of decrees. In order to this, he neither on the one hand leaves the doctrine exposed to false consequences, nor on the other denies the doctrine itself; on the contrary he declares, that not only as a Christian, but even as a philosopher he believes predestination, for with him prescience and preordination are the same thing. He thinks, nobody will deny, that

In general, then, this way of good and bad consequences ought to be used, when there is reason to fear some may infer bad consequences; and when

that God foresaw the issue, to which all things would be brought in the end, and consequently that not preventing was allowing and appointing them. He proceeds to lament the vanity of human curiosity in pretending to pry into that, to which the shallowness of every man's capacity might remind him he is not equal. He owns, that himself is not able to comprehend the matter. "But (adds he) there is nothing in this inability to countenance the insults of infidels, or the scruples of the timorous. I can imagine only two ways to satisfy an inquirer in this matter. One would be to give you a complete idea of the decrees of God, to compare them exactly with the dispositions of sinners, and to make it appear by that comparison that sinners were not necessitated to commit those crimes, which cause their eternal destruction. But this way is far above our capacities. Many have undertaken it, and, although we would not refuse to their piety the praises, which are due to it, yet, methinks, we owe this testimony to the truth, that they have not yet fully satisfied all the objections, to

which the subject is liable. I say more, without pretending to prophecy I may venture to foretell, this never can be done; because it would be drawing conclusions from unknown premises. Who can boast of knowing all the arrangement, all the extent, all the combinations of God's decrees? The depth of these decrees, the obscure manner, in which the scripture speaks of them, and (if I may be allowed to say so.) the darkness with which they have often been covered by attempts to elucidate them, place them infinitely beyond our reach. But there is a second way, that is to refer the matter to the decision of a being, whose wisdom and truth cannot be suspected; we may safely believe, his testimony is beyond all exception, and his conclusion an infallible oracle. We know a being infinitely capable of deciding this question, and who indeed has decided it. It is God. To his glorious Majesty I venture to put this question.

The eternal destiny of my soul, before I had a being, does it force my will? Do what they call in the schools predestination, and reprobation destroy this proposition,

if



when they seem to flow from the text itself; for in this case they ought to be prevented and refuted, and contrary consequences opposed against them. (9)

if I perish, my damnation proceeds only from myself? Remove this difficulty my God, and take off entirely the vail, with which this interesting truth is covered.

Let us suppose, God makes us this answer. The narrowness of your mind renders this matter inconceivable to you; it is impossible, that finite creatures, like you, should be able to understand the extent of my decrees, and to see what connections they have with the destiny of my creatures. I only fully know them. I declare, then, that none of my decrees offer violence to any of my creatures, and that your destruction can come only from yourselves. Have patience; you shall one day perfectly know what now you cannot comprehend, and you shall then see with your own eyes what you now see only with mine. Cease then to anticipate a period, which my wisdom defers, and laying aside speculation devote yourselves to practice. - - Had God explained himself in this manner, would it not be the height of rashness and insolence to doubt this testimony, and to desire more light on the subject? Now, we affirm, God has given this answer in

his just complaints concerning the vices of men, and in his compassionate attention to human miseries, *O! if Israel had hearkened unto me! if thou hadst known in this thy day, &c.* he has answered this by his express assurances, that *he desireth not the death of a sinner*, that he is *not willing any should perish, but that all should come, &c.* he has answered this by the comfortable ideas, which he has given us of his mercy, long-suffering, and patience, Rom. ii. 4, 5. - - Finally he has given this answer expressly in our text, &c.

If the first way be entirely closed, the second is entirely open: but men love to take an opposite way, they leave *things revealed*, and rashly pretend to dive into *secret things* - - in vain the sinner seeks in reprobation what flows only from his own depravity. Thou Lord dost not say to thy creatures, *Yield, yield miserable wretches to my supreme will*, which decoys you into sin, in order to plunge you into misery, unto which from all eternity I have ordained you. Thou Lord openest thy benevolent arms to us, thou usest the properest motives to affect intelligent spirits, thou openest

## XIV.

## REFLECT ON THE END PROPOSED IN AN EXPRESSION OR AN ACTION. (1)

Although this is not very different from the way of principles, of which we have already spoken: yet it may afford a variety in discussing them.

If,

openest to us the gates of heaven, and, if we be lost among so many means of being saved, to thee will belong righteousness, to us shame and confusion of face. Wilt thou not say to us, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself?"—*Sur la cause de la perte des pecheurs, tom. ix.*

I trust, I shall be forgiven for inserting this long extract, when it is remembered what numbers of all parties, like Tertullian, begin their defences of their doctrines by abusing people, calling them hard names, and delivering them over to the devil. How could that champion think to convert Marcion by such language as that, with which he begins the fifth chapter of his second book. *O you dogs! O canes! quos foras apostolus expellit latrantes in Deum veritatis, hæc sunt argumentationum essæ quæ obroditis. Si Deus bonus, et prescius futuri, &c.* There is no such thing as being angry with an honest man, who like Mr. Saurin proposes his sentiments with modesty and candour: but who was

ever bullied into believing? *Let our moderation be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand.*

(1) *Reflect on ends proposed.* Reflections of this kind are of great consequence to ministers. 1. In composing sermons.—Ordination sermons very properly turn on—the design of God in appointing a standing gospel ministry—on the aims of bad, and of good men in entering on the office, and so on—Funeral sermons are frequently composed on this plan—the design of God in afflictive providences—the designs of ministers in celebrating the praises of the deceased, and so on—Fast sermons, thanksgiving, and commemoration-sermons are often with great propriety composed on the special views, and designs of each.

2. Attention to scope, end, and design is necessary to the understanding of the sense of any writer, particularly biblical writers. John xx. 31. *These four gospels were written that ye might believe that Jesus*

If, for example, you were speaking of justification, in the sense in which S. Paul taught it, you must observe the *ends*, which the apostle proposed,

as

*is the Christ, and that believing ye might have life through his name.—2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. All scripture is given for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.—Jude iii. I write unto you of the common salvation, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith.* All preachers have not had the same views in reading these holy oracles of God. Some read them as an Irish priest read the act of toleration. He said in a sermon preached at Whitehall 1707, “What men call the toleration act takes away some penalties inflicted by former acts, on Dissenters: but it does not repeal or weaken one tittle the act of Uniformity. Schism like murder remains a damnable sin, although all punishment be taken away. There is not one word of toleration in that statute, called the toleration act.” An old woman, named Foulks, had the courage to bring this reverend prebendary of Christ’s church, Dublin, to take his trial at Hick’s Hall for this court sermon. *Fran. Higgins. Sermon at Whitehall, Feb. 26, 1707.*

3. The *success* of a minister’s labours much depends on the people’s belief of the uprightness of his intentions. Never, surely, were unworthy ends in preaching more notoriously exposed than in the general course of court-sermons from the accession of James I. to the accession of the present august family. I except individuals: but as for the general run of court-chaplains in those times, they were mere newsmongers, their sermons were a kind of journals of the house of spiritual Lords, and they may be still considered as a kind of tragicomical church gazettes. Compare acts of parliament and sermons, the journals of the house with the sermons of the year, and see whether I exaggerate. When I say, success depends on this, I do not mean success in stirring up strife and penal laws, in obtaining the favour of a prince, or honours and preferments for himself: but I mean such success in promoting the glory of God, and the good of mankind, as that, at which a pious minister is taught by his commission to aim.

4. Aims and ends should be studied by pastors in  
order



as—1. To put a just difference between Jesus Christ and Moses, the law and the gospel, and to

order to *church-government*. There is a generation of animals of both sexes, and of all ranks and parties, who join christian churches with a view to domineer in them. The most successful chief of this illustrious band is called *κατ' ἐξοχὴν* (I speak as a fool.) THE POPE. Some of the first puritans, agreeably to the analogy of the English tongue, which diminishes a great goose into a little gosling, and duck into duckling, denominated such of their brethren as sought to domineer, more papali *Pope-lings*, that is, little popes. In latin they called one of the first *Papa ille Antichristus*, and the last *papicola, imago belluæ*, and I wonder they never grecified pappa into pappax, and that into papappax, and that again into papapappax. They knew Aristophanes, (See *Νεφέλαι*. Act. I. Sc. 4.) and he might have furnished an apology for a hot-headed brother mentioned by Dr. Walker, who filthily if not falsely affirmed that a puritan said, *Diabolus cacavit Hierarchiam*. It would be absurd to blush in refuting such scribblers; for the cause of conscience dominion has been pleaded by producing the foul and factious words concerning it, which were extorted from men driven to

despair by its exercise. In this controversy there is no need of literature to plead the cause of toleration, a new testament decides the matter. An Egyptian cobbler founded the christian church in Alexandria, and was *pastor* of it. The good man was friendly, and his people complaisantly called him father, or abba. He was succeeded in his office by a race of men called *Fathers*. In process of time the colleagues being twelve, and being all arrived at fatherhood, it became necessary to name the chief pastor Pappa, or *Grandfather*. This interfering with another grandfather, he of Alexandria was obliged to put up with the vague title of *Patriarch*, head, or chief of the fathers. And what of all this? What! --- Why Mr. Selden published this history from the Arabick manuscript of Eutychius's *origines*, with a latin version and large notes of his own; and farthermore Dr. Pocock republished it, in his edition of the annals of Eutychius. Well, with what *design* did these learned men take such pains? Mr. Selden's preface to the *origines* will inform you. It was learnedly to prove that Alexandrian polity was proper for us. I only say, my rule of faith and practice is entitled "the new

to shew, against those, who would blend them together, and so confound both in one body of religion, that they cannot be so united. (2)—

2. To

new testament of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*;" my gospel is that *according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*: and not that according to the wills, fancies, and interests of weak or wicked writers in Arabick.

It is a melancholy consideration, that no sooner is a church gathered than up springs some proud and petulant *Diotrephes*, who loveth to have the pre-eminence, prating against the sacred oracles delivered by the apostles, discouraging some, rejecting others, assuming a right of directing all, (3 Ep. John 9, 10.) and becoming, through the honest inattention of the harmless brethren, the patron of the living, the bible of the minister, and in the end the wolf of the flock, the ruin of the church. Nothing degrades a minister more than a mean submission to such a contemptible savage, who not unfrequently rules him, poor man! with a rod of iron. What renders these animals *most* despicable is their total want, in general, of every qualification necessary to direct a flock. Gross ignorance, violent tempers, loose morals, ill manners, a little grimace on Sundays, and ten years success in trade

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makes one of these monsters. He is a LORD BROTHER at home, and he is worse than a Lord bishop at a distance. Our churches have greater advantages than others in this case. For 1. We have none of these masters till we ourselves create them.—2. If our folly give them existence they have no civil power over us.—3. We can unmake, and annihilate them just when we please.—Or 4. If the minister fear, as he has sometimes through various connections reason to fear, that to unhorse Diotrephes would be to give his good wife, or children, or friends a fall; (I refer to Gen. xlix. 17.) If he cannot pluck up such a tare without plucking up wheat also, and so doing more harm than good (Mat. xiii. 29.) he may preserve his own personal freedom by a just inattention to such a tyrant, and by setting his people an example of love of liberty. Or 5. He may give up his charge, and depart, as many of the best of men have been driven to do. In these little tyrants the proverb is fulfilled, Religion brings forth riches, and the daughter devours the mother.

(2) *The law and the gospel cannot be blended together.* Our

X

author

2. To preserve men from that Pharisaical pride, which reigned amongst the Jews, who *sought to establish their own righteousness, and not the righteousness of God.*—3. To take away such inadequate remedies

author explains himself at large on this subject, vol. i. page 119, and following. Some attention is necessary in studying the holy scriptures, and in reading the writings of divines, in order to reconcile seeming contradictions on the doctrine of *law*. S. Paul affirms, Rom. vi. 14. that Christians were *not* under the law; and the same S. Paul affirms, 1 Cor. ix. 21. that they *were* under the law; and, what is still more remarkable, he says, I, *through* the law, am dead to the law, Gal. ii. 19. as if the law were destructive of itself. The true source of all difficulties on this subject is the vague, equivocal meaning of the term, *law*; the apostle used it in different senses, Rom. iii. 27. and an inattention to this throws a veil over his writings.

Our old divines allowed this equivocal sense of the word, *law*, and expounded accordingly: but, as their attention was chiefly turned to the establishing of that article of faith, by which Luther had declared the church stood or fell, that is, justification by faith without human merit, their writings (I speak with all due reve-

rence to those eminent servants of Christ.) their writings in general leave the doctrine of law in a mist. See *Perkins's Com. on Galat. vol. ii. of his works.*

If we take the word law, as scripture often useth it, for the *whole Jewish œconomy*, we are under it, and we are not under it, one part of it annihilates another part of it, and the annihilation of one part establisheth the other. The Jewish religion, or the *law*, is considerable in *four* different points of light. 1. If the *doctrine* of Judaism be considered, it will appear to have had the same system, that we have—the same God—the same mediator—revelation for a rule of faith and practice—the doctrines of creation, providence, human depravity, divine assistance, and so on. In this view the Jewish and Christian are not two religions: but one in two different degrees of improvement; the childhood and the manhood of the same person.—2. The Jewish religion may be considered in a *moral* view. Here again it agrees with ours. Are Christians under a natural, necessary, revealed, eternal, and indispensable obligation to moral rectitude? So were



remedies as the law by way of shadow exhibited for the expiation of sins; as sacrifices, and purifications; as well as those, which Pagan superstition proposed, such as washing in spring water, offering

were the Jews. Do we fall short of that rectitude, which is requisite to an exact conformity to the rule, and are we guilty on account of irregularity and depravity? So were they. Were they justified by faith? So are we. See Rom. ii. iii. iv. v. Heb. xi.—3. The Jewish religion may be considered in an *experimental* light. Thus also we agree. Religious pains and pleasures, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows are the same; and the psalms of David are pictures of Christian hearts.—4. The Jewish religion is considerable in point of *Polity, Oeconomy, Government*. Here we differ. Their church polity expired when Christ died, and in that new system of government, which our divine redeemer set up, lies the superior excellence and glory of the christian church above that of the Jews. S. Paul, who was the apostle of the gentiles, magnified his office by explaining the grounds and reasons of it; and, if I may so speak, this topick was the *fort* of this divinely inspired man. Their church was national, and local: ours congregational and universal—Their sacerdotal administra-

tion was successional in one family: our administration is elective—Their service was pompous and expensive: ours is cheap and plain—The spirit of their church was confined and partial; that of ours is liberal, and universal, and every christian is a philanthropist. In vain the papal church, and others along with them, fetch musick and habits, fasts and festivals, priests, who were princes, and princes, who were priests from the old testament; in vain do they explain baptism by circumcision, and the Lord's supper by the passover, admitting and governing members of a *christian* church by laws of a *Jewish* polity; S. Paul shall answer for us, *we are dead with Christ* to first principles, given for a temporary use by God, and perplexed and perpetuated by the traditions of men, Col. ii. 20, 22. And thus, *through the doctrine, morality, and experience of the law, we are dead to the polity of the law, and live unto God*. Gal. ii. 19.

A learned foreigner has treated the doctrine of *quotation from the old testament* with great accuracy. He does not immediately enter

ing victims to their Gods, &c.—4. To bring men to

into our views ; however, he serves the subject. His design is to investigate the purposes, for which the writers of the new testament quoted the old. In order to which he enumerates—the *quotations*—the *authors*, whose words are quoted—the *writers*, who quote them—and so on, till he comes to his last article, the *use* of the passages quoted. *Prophecies* are quoted for the sake of shewing the accomplishment of them—*moral sentences* for the regulation of new testament morality—*allegories* for illustration—*arguments* to prove doctrines—sometimes the same passages are quoted for *divers* uses—and so on : but where shall we find a quotation for *church-government*? *Andreae Kesleri de Dict. vet. Test. in nov. allegatione.*

The apostle of the Gentiles, *more Paulino*, illustrates this subject by a set of the most beautiful images. We have remarked one, vol. i. page 135, note 7. Many are in his writings, and divines have imitated him by a variety of expressive figures. That of a statuary making a model in wax or clay of an intended marble, or golden statue of a king seems to me well-chosen. Thus Proclus, patriarch of Constantinople, illustrates 1 Cor. x. 11.

Και γὰρ ἀνδριαντοποιὸς ἀνδρὶ ντὰ χαλκῷ, &c. - - - but the glory of this subject is intrinsic ; in itself, and not in the theological way of setting it off we boast. See those golden words of Heidegger, printed in Capitals, vol. i. page 137, note 8. *S. Procli Orat. xiv. apud Bibliot. Francisci Combesii, tom. i.*

(3) *The blood of Christ is the only atonement for sin.* Saurin says, “ the epistle to the Philippians was written to guard the believers there against the errors of those, who first polluted the doctrine of the infant-church. I mean those teachers, who professed to receive and submit to the gospel, but pretended,—that it ought to be mixed with the observations of the Levitical worship—and that such worship should be associated with the sacrifice of the cross in the justification of a sinner.

I assign this end to the epistles to the Philippians and Galatians to distinguish it from another end, which the apostle proposed in some other epistles, particularly those to the Romans and Hebrews. The two latter were intended to discuss the controversies, which were on foot between unconverted Jews, and Christians : either to reclaim the first, or to prevent the apostacy of the last.

to the true and only atonement for sin, which is the blood of Jesus Christ. (3)

last. But the two former epistles were written against those converted Jews, who only seemed to embrace Christianity in order to make a monstrous association of it with Judaism. The principal work of an interpreter in explaining these epistles is well to distinguish these two designs, and carefully to guard against confounding the adversaries, whom the apostle opposes. One is the thesis of such as regard the gospel as an imposture; the other is the thesis of those, who consider it as a religion come from God, but who think, we ought not to separate from it the Levitical ceremonies, which had the same origin.

The principal cause of confusion upon this subject is, that some of the principles, which serve to refute the Jews, who wholly reject the gospel, serve also to refute those, who would receive and debase it by mixing with it Levitical rites. For this reason the apostle repeated a part of what he had

said against the Jews in his epistle to the Romans, in his epistle to the Galatians against Judaizing Christians, however different the doctrines of these erroneous people were. Such are these principles. *Man is not justified by works but by faith.* Rom. iii. 28, &c. Gal. ii. 16.—*As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.* Gal. iii. 10.—*The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.* Gal. iii. 24.—*Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.* Rom. iv. 3.—But there are also in this epistle to the Galatians other principles, which regard only Judaizing Christians, and which cannot be applied at all to the Jews. As these. *If while we seek to be justified by Christ we ourselves also are found sinners—If I build again the things which I destroyed.—These can only regard the system of Judaizing Christians.* Saur. Ser. tom. viii. *sur les citoyens du ciel, &c.*



## XV.

CONSIDER WHETHER THERE BE ANY THING  
REMARKABLE IN THE MANNER OF THE  
SPEECH OR ACTION. (4)

For example. *In all these things we are more  
than conquerors through him that loved us.* Rom.  
viii.

(4) *Remark the manner of  
an expression.* This topick  
is of incomparable utility in  
disarming an adversary, in  
justifying your own mode of  
attacking him, in proving,  
illustrating, or aggravating  
a subject. A few brief ex-  
amples follow.

1. To confound an adver-  
sary. Before Erasmus first  
published his annotations on  
the new testament, he be-  
sought Edward Lee, after-  
ward archbishop of York, to  
examine and correct them.  
Lee did so. Erasmus, as  
might have been expected,  
abused him. Lee justified  
himself; and, beside disprov-  
ing the assertions of his ad-  
versary, availed himself of  
the *manner*, in which he had  
treated him, and largely de-  
scanted on ERASMIAN MO-  
DERSTY, which, says he, is  
become proverbial: The  
language of Erasmus is too  
bad to be transcribed: but  
Lee, having repeated, it thus  
interrogates and exclaims.  
“Rogo te Erasme. Hæc-  
cine sunt verba te digna, qui  
videri vis *solus theologus*, ac

*censor orbis?* Quid potuit dici  
spurcius, odiosius, virulen-  
tius? Aut quis *rabula*, quis  
*scurra*, quis *minus*, quis *la-  
trinaris* tam fœda expurgas-  
set? &c.” The presumption  
in these cases is always against  
the railer. *Epist. Apol. Ed.  
Leei, Anno 1519. ad calc.  
ejusd. Annotat. fol. 140.*

2. The manner of an op-  
ponent will frequently jus-  
tify a peculiar manner of  
attacking him. Thus our  
Dr. Ames justifies his expos-  
ing to papists, and to the  
whole world, the treatment,  
that the puritans had met  
with from the episcopalians  
of this country. “Cum pi-  
entissimi viri, verique tena-  
cissimi, imo per eorum latera  
veritatis pars non minima,  
non erroris tantum, sed schis-  
matis, sed hæreseos infimu-  
lantur, cum non privatim  
hæc tanta crimina, sed scrip-  
tis publicis audacter inten-  
tantur, ita ut non auditu  
tantum et incerto rumore:  
sed consignatis tabulis ad  
hostes jam sint perlata, quod  
et alias liquet, et ex collo-  
quio Hamptoniensi a ponti-  
ficiis

viii. 37. You may remark, that there is a more than ordinary force in these words *more than conquerors*; for they express a heroical triumph. He does not simply say, We bear our trials with patience; he not only says, We shall conquer in this conflict: but he affirms, *We are more than conquerors*. It is much that faith resists trials without being oppressed;

ficiis facto Gallico, et Parisiis edito, &c. &c." *Puritanismus Anglicanus. præf.* 1610. Vid. etiam. *Piercii vindiciæ. ad Exter. Theol. Appellatio.*

3. The manner sometimes *proves*. Our author avails himself of this in rendering two disputed points clear and evident. "During the last twenty years before the suppression of protestantism in France, by revoking the edict of Nantz, which had allowed the open profession of it, there was a continual series of decrees, edicts, declarations, orders, condemnations of churches, desolations of temples, civil and criminal processes, imprisonments, banishments, fines, privations of offices, depriving parents of children, and various other persecutions, nothing was heard but this kind of discourse, *The king will have it so—The king has taken it in hand*, and so on. Henceforward it must be said in the kingdom, *I do not believe because I am persuaded: but I believe because the king would have me believe*. To speak properly, this is equal to say-

ing, *I believe nothing. I will profess myself a Turk, or a Jew, or whatever the king pleases*." Hence our author concludes, first, That protestantism was invincible by reasoning—and next, that a religion depending on the will of a prince would naturally support itself by ruining some of his subjects, and by enslaving the rest. *Persecut. of French Protest.* 1686.

4. Manner *illustrates* and *aggravates*. 1 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 7, 8. *Ye are witnesses, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you - - we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children - - We were gentle, even as a nurse cherisheth her children. So being affectionately desirous, &c.—2 Cor. xiii. 10. I shall use sharpness, &c.—Gal. iii. 1. O foolish Galatians! who hath bewitched you?*

Manner of preaching is known to be an article of great consideration to auditors; divines, therefore, who write on the subject, never fail to exhort preachers to acquire  
an

oppressed; it is more to conquer these trials after a rude combat: but to affirm the believer shall be *more than a conqueror* is as much as to say, he shall conquer without a combat, and triumph without resistance; it is as much as to say, he shall make trials the matter of his joy and glory, as the apostle says, *we glory in tribulation*, considering them not as afflictions and sorrows: but as divine honours

an agreeable manner of delivering their discourses. Cardinal Borromeo, who was also archbishop of Milan, drew up a plan of preaching for the use of the clergy of his diocese, and very properly, having first given instructions concerning the *matter*, or the doctrine of a sermon, treats of what we call manner under the article *form*, by which he means style, elocution, voice, action, and whatever else may belong to expressing and delivering a sermon. “ Elocutionis genus *exquisitum* ne affectet—*fucum* omnem fugiat—*imperitæ multitudinis consuetudinem* loquendi ne sequatur—*verba antiqua et peregrina* fugiat—*fati, fortunæ, infortunii nomina*, aliaque id generis omnino cavebit—*Epithetorum* item nimium usum, et *poeticum* dicendi genus ne confectetur—*anicularum* non adhibeat *proverbia*—*eiusdem rei repetitionem* vitet—Cum de peccatis, ad luxuriam pertinentibus, agit, cautionem adhibeat, ne im-

prudens in *obscæna verba* incidat—videat ne loquendo turpes *cogitationes* injiciat—*adulationis verba* omnino fugiat—*ambitiosum* dicendi genus caveat—Ne *ambigue*, ne *concise* item, ut auditores incerto sint, ne *obscure* loquatur—*vocem* et *actionem* ita temperare concionator conabitur, ut non ex arte petere, sed vere, et ex *natura* dicere videatur—non importune *suggestum palmis* feriat: sed cum rei magnitudo poscit—non per suggestum quasi *volitabit*, nunc ex hoc, nunc ex illo angulo profiliens—*Rectus* in suggestu stet—ne *nares* corruget—ne *labra* lambat—ne *mentum* pectori affigat—ne *brachium* tanquam gladiator immoderate projiciat—ne *tussiat*, ne *expuat* crebro, nisi necessitate coactus—ne in eloquendo per *nares* majorem spiritus partem effundat—ne crebro *anbelitu*.” &c. &c. Carol. Borromæi S. Prax. Cardin. et Arch. Mediol. Pastorum instructiones. Capit. de form. de dec. de voce.



honours and favours. (5) This was also the apostle's mind, when he wrote to the Philippians, *unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.* He considers sufferings as gifts of the liberality of God, for which the faithful are obliged to be thankful. So in this other passage, *I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* You may here remark the heroism and magnanimity of S. Paul. His faith seems to defy all the powers of nature. He assembles them all—*life—death—angels, &c.* to triumph over them, and to exult in their defeat. This language marks a full persuasion of the favour of God, and an invincible confidence in his love. (6)

Such

(5) *More than conquerors.* Whether Mr. Claude took his thoughts upon this passage from Chrysostom I know not, but both speak very much alike. The whole is too long to transcribe, I'll insert only a few lines.

Το γὰρ ὅτι θανάτου τὸ ἐστίν, οὐχ ὅτι νῦν νικῶμεν μόνον, ἀλλ' ὅτι καὶ δι' αὐτὴν ἐπιβουλεύομεθα νικῶμεν, καὶ οὐχ ἀπλῶς νικῶμεν ἀλλ' ὙΠΕΡΝΙΚΩΜΕΝ. τούτοις, μετὰ ευκολίας ἀπάσης, χωρὶς ἰδρώτων καὶ πόνων· οὐ γὰρ πράγματα ὑπομενόντες, ἀλλὰ τὴν γνώμην παρασκευάζοντες μόνον, οὕτω πανταχοῦ καὶ τρεπὰ ἰσώμεν

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κατὰ τῶν ἐχθρῶν. καὶ μάλα εἰκотовς θεός· γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡμῖν ὁ ΣΥΝΑΓΩΝΙΖΟΜΕΝΟΣ. μὴ τοίνυν ἀπιστήσης εἰ μασιζόμενοι τῶν μασιζούντων περιγινομεθα, &c. &c. Chrysost. Opera, tom. iii. orat. 15.

(6) *Persuasion of the favour of God.* I do not know whence it is (says Monsieur Saurin) but the fact is certain; of all churches in the world, there are none, that wrest the doctrine of assurance as some of ours do. No where do they draw consequences more directly opposite to those, which naturally flow from this doctrine, than

Y here

Such remarks as these may be made upon many expressions of Jesus Christ, wherein are discovered dignity and majesty, which cannot belong to any meer creature; as when he says, *Before Abraham was I am* (7)—*Whilst I am in the world*  
*I am*

here amongst us. People lull themselves asleep in a chimerical confidence, and they rest upon imaginary systems and assurance, which ought to rest only upon *the rock of ages*. These persons make a scruple, even when engaged in the most criminal habits, of saying, they doubt of their salvation: and, as if a persuasion of being saved discharged us from the necessity of working out our salvation, assurance of getting to heaven is considered as a virtue, which supplies the want of every other - - - *I am persuaded*, says S. Paul, of what? of being saved live in what manner I will? No, but *I am persuaded that neither death nor life can separate me from the love of God*. That is, I am persuaded I shall triumph over all temptations, and persevere in loving God. *Saurin. ser. tom. ii. S. premiere.*

(7) *Some phrases are expressive of dignity*. There is, undoubtedly, a great deal of truth in this remark: but, it must be allowed, great accuracy and prudence are necessary in determining and urging such modes of speech in controversy. Here, then,

it should seem, the necessity of *philological* knowledge for a minister of the gospel comes in. None but a good philologist ought to deal in arguments taken from idioms, epithets, tours of expression; in a word, from the nature and structure of a language. Theodoret lays down this rule, “*Non sunt dogmatum norma censenda, quæ in Ecclesia panegyricæ et declamatorie dicuntur.*” This rule is applicable to many *anonymous orations* bound up with those of some of the fathers, which, probably, were only private declamations of students of divinity imitative of a father, laid up with his works as pretty essays and elucidations, and, after they had acquired the venerable marks of moths, and dust, and antiquity, published with the genuine works of the father. The same rule may be applied to many declamatory lives, legends, orations, and other discourses; for, in such, hundreds of fine words, lines, phrases, and expressions actually mean nothing at all. I will not at present cite examples from pretended reasoners in theology: but I will endeavour first

*I am the light of the world—All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them—Ye believe*  
*in*

first to convey my idea by an example, in the inanity of which we have no interest. The celebrated Hakspan entered on his hebrew professorship in the university of Altdorff in Switzerland, by an oration on the necessity of sacred philology in divinity; and thus he begins, “Nobilissimi, amplissimi, prudentissimique domini Scholaræ, Domini benignissimi—Nobilis atque consultissime domine Procancellarie—Magnifice Domine Rector—Illustres atque generosi domini Barones—Spectabiles singularum facultatum Decani, viri reverendi plurimum, consultissimi, experimentissimi, clarissimi, Professores celeberrimi, fautores atque amici honoratissimi—tuque literariæ juventutis corona ornatissima, lectissima”—If the question were concerning the *oratorical* value of this address, perhaps it would diminish in comparison with the simple style of Dignissime Domine, Domine Procancellarie, et tota Universitas. But it lies before us here in a *logical* point of view, and although we were to admire the fertility of the professor’s genius, the complaisance of his address, and the punctilious accuracy of his *traits de grace*; yet we must say, should a historian

some seven or eight hundred years hence write the life of that Mr. Vicechancellor, whom the professor complimented, he ought neither to seek his *birth* in Hakspan’s *nobilis*, nor his *mental* excellence in his *consultissime*, nor in both the necessity of possessing discretion and fame in order to procancellarian preferment. There is *nobile genus*—*nobile pectus*—*nobile nomen*—*nobilis Phalaridis taurus*—*nobile facinus*.

Monsieur Voltaire observes, God called Cyrus *his shepherd*, Isai. xlv. 28. and Nebuchadnezzar *his servant*, Jer. xliii. 10. and thence concludes very gravely, that the religions of Babylon and Persia were as agreeable to God, as that of the Jews was. (*sur la tolerance*, chap. xii.) Some divines have remarked, that Cyrus said, the *God of heaven* gave him his kingdom. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23.—that Nebuchadnezzar called Jehovah *King of heaven*, Dan. iv. 37.—that Artaxerxes called Ezra *a scribe of the God of heaven*, and acknowledged, he had the *law of God* in his hand, Ezra vii. 12, 14.—that S. Luke wrote to a *Theophilus*, a lover of God, Acts i. 1.—that S. Paul allowed Festus to be a man *most noble*, Acts xxvi. 25. and great intelligence  
 Y 2 have



*in God, believe also in me—Whatsoever ye shall ask in my*

have they derived from each of these articles: but, were I to punish one of these triflers with a task, I would require him to compose a sermon on these words, *King Abasuerus sent a decree, and a letter into every province, that the decree should be published in the language, and according to the writing of every people.* Esther i. 20, 22.

The learned Haksplan observes very justly, that this rule of Theoderet does not hold good in the articles of our faith. “Non eadem semper philologiæ sacræ ratio est. Alius in suggestu, in Academiis alius mysteria tradit; uterque modo diverso, &c. of this he gives many well chosen examples—*De locutionibus sacris—De nominibus divinis—De angelorum, dæmonumque nominibus, &c. &c.* Among other excellent remarks, he fully answers Gossavius, Socinus, Crellius, and others, who, having found in scripture two almighty Gods, one supreme, and the other subordinate, assure us, that *Deos* stands for the subordinate god, and *o Deos*, theos with an article for the supreme God. *De spiritu sancto* 33.—*Disput. Sylloge. Theod. Haksplanii.*

It may not be improper in this place to add one word concerning those *allocutions*,

or introductory titles and addresses, which are proper in christian sermons. S. Thomas taught the church of Rome, that the angel Gabriel saluted the Virgin Mary in exact conformity to Cicero’s rule *de benevolentia captanda*, when he said, *Hail*, and so on, Luke i. 28. Accordingly, the Romish preachers, generally after the exordium, always pay their respects to this patroness in the angel’s words. This is absurd. Can it be supposed, that God has doomed the virgin to undergo the fatigue of hearing all the sermons, that are preached in the papal church? There is, however, a proper use of sober introductory addresses. The French king’s chaplains always begin their sermons before his majesty with—*Sire!* These are the words of Jesus Christ—Thus spake a prophet—To know God, and to love him is holiness and happiness, &c.—In the chapel of a nobleman—*My Lord*—In that of a nunnery—*Ladies*—In common—*My Brethren*, and so on. The best writers in this church advise the use of sober titles and addresses taken from scripture, and free from secular bombast. *De predicat. Evang. Joan. Segobiens. l. ii. cap. 49, 50, 51.*

*my name that will I do.* There are many passages of the same kind. (8)

The introductory language of the apostles is—*Men of Judea, all ye that dwell at Jerusalem.* Acts ii. 14.—*Ye rulers and elders,* iv. 8. *Men, brethren, and fathers,* vii. 2. —*Men of Israel, and ye that fear God,* xiii. 16.—*Ye men of Athens,* xvii. 22.—*My little children,* Gal. iv. 19.—*My brethren, my joy and crown,* Phil. iv. 1.—*Beloved,* 1 John iv. 1, 7, 11.—*Dearly beloved,* Ph. iv. 1. In imitation of these, our ministers say—*Brethren—Christians—Fellow-Christians, &c. &c.* a good judge says “true politeness consists in giving to every one the greatest satisfaction in our power, consequently it prescribes all *empty* and *long* compliments.

(8) *The manner is considerable in many passages.* This common-place like all the rest, may be very advantageously used, when proper discernment is employed: on the contrary, what an occasion of trifling when love of the marvellous suffers fancy to make the choice! Thus when scripture speaks of the jasper, the chrysolite, the topaz, the amethyst, Rev. xxi. 19, 20, &c. it is not enough to have them for ornaments: but we must also take them for medicines; they shall be pulverized, and prescribed for diseases, or hung about the neck to preserve

from contagions; as if, when the holy ghost spake of precious stones, he meant to convey the idea of *healing*. By such principles Justin Martyr found the *cross* of Christ in the *horn* of the Rhinoceros, Psalm xxii. 22. Το γὰρ κεράτων μονοκεράτων οτι το χημα τε σώου εστι μου προ-εξηγησάμην υμιν—thus also Tertullian, after Cyprian and Justin, expounds Deut. xxxiii. 17. *Tauri decor ejus, cornua unicornis cornua ejus, in eis nationes ventilabit pariter ad summum usque terræ, non utique rhinoceros destinabatur unicornis, nec minoratus bicornis, sed Christus in illo significabatur, taurus ob utramque dispositionem, aliis ferox ut judex, aliis mansuetus ut salvator, cujus cornua essent crucis extima.*

When the typical economy adumbrates the Messiah under the images of oxen, goats, &c. it means to point out the sacrifice of his *body*, not the dispositions of his *mind*.

Thus also Cyprian discovers in Ezek. ix. 4. the letter tau Τ, and, though this letter is more like a gallows than a cross, and though the punishment of the cross was unknown when the prophet wrote, yet he imagines, the angel marked all the pious people in Jerusalem with the sign of the *cross*. God for-

## XVI.

COMPARE WORDS AND ACTIONS WITH SIMILAR  
WORDS AND ACTIONS.

The Evangelist speaks of *the things, that Jesus began to do and to teach*. Acts i. 1. Now he says the same of Moses, *he was mighty in words and in deeds*. Acts vii. 22. Here you may observe, that these two things joined together, *doing and teaching*, are distinguishing characters of a true prophet, who never separates practice from doctrine. You may then make an edifying comparison between Moses and Jesus Christ: both *did* and *taught*; but there was a great difference between the *teaching* of the one and that of the other. One taught justice, the other mercy—one abased, the other exalted—one terrified, the other comforted. There was also a great difference between the *deeds* of the one and those of the other. Most of the miracles of Moses were miracles of *destruction*, insects, frogs, hail, and others of the same kind, with which he chastised the Egyptians. But the miracles of Jesus Christ were always miracles of *benevolence*, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, &c. (9)

So

bid we should doubt the piety of these venerable fathers, their works will amply reward a perusal: but would they be less valuable, would they not be far more pleasing if such oddities had no place in them? In short, Le-Clerc's canon should never be forgotten, *multa videri in personibus emphatica, quæ*

*in ipsis fontibus nullam emphasin habent*. Father Nouet used to compare the fathers to a wood, in which such as were pursued saved themselves. In truth, many an allegorist has found shelter there!

(9) Compare subjects; and remark the difference. "Prov. xix. 21. There are many devices



So again, when the infidelity of the Jews in rejecting the Messiah is discussed, you may examine their

*vices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.* The vanity of our devices and the stability of God's counsels are evident; for our devices and God's counsels have *three* remarkable differences. 1. They differ in their *nature*; our's are devices, *fancies*; God's are *counsels*, *wise deliberate determinations*. 2. They differ in *number*; our devices have multiplicity and variety, they are *many*; God's counsel is *one* uniform consistent plan. 3. They differ in their *manner of existing*; our devices are in our *hearts*, in intention only; God's counsels *stand*, they produce the intended effect. *Dr. Sander-son's sermons*, viii. *ad populum*.

*Compare subjects; and remark differences.* Our best writers on the subject of pulpit-eloquence go by this rule, they compare *pagan* with *christian* orators, the oratory proper for the *bar* with that, which becomes the *senate*, and both with that, which belongs to the *pulpit*. In their general texture they are alike: but in many particulars they differ; for the pulpit should always speak *ad populum*, except in particular places, as in royal, collegiate, and other such

chapels, and churches; and even there sermons should preserve a coolness, plainness, purity and simplicity of both matter and manner. The wiser the auditors the less need of amplification and ornaments in the sermon. Amplification and persuasion imply ignorance, inattention and unwillingness in those, to whom they are addressed. In what degree these are to be supposed of any audience concerning the subject of the sermon, in that degree of narrating, reasoning, and adorning a faithful preacher will compose his discussion, and accommodate his address. In order to obtain ability for such a variety of address, a young man should well work himself, if I may be allowed such an expression, in such preparatory exercises, as may bring him to be at ease, at home, as it were, in the pulpit. This ease being acquired, his mind will be freed from a thousand incumbrances, and he will be more cool and at leisure to pursue his chief design in his sermon.

The following six rules were laid down by an excellent judge. "1. *Begin early to try to preach.* In all things, especially in speaking, a teneris assuescere multum est.

S.

their prejudices, and their maxims as they are narrated in the gospel; and these you may compare with those of the church of Rome in rejecting the reformation, for they are very much alike. (1)

So again, when you consider S. Paul's answers to the objections of the Jews, who pleaded, that they were the people of God, and that his covenant belonged to Abraham and his posterity; you may

S. Austin says; *ars concionandi in juventute discenda est*. If you begin late, exercise the oftener.

2. Take an *analysis* of a text, or subject from any author, and *discuss* it yourself, as well as you can. Explain it—illustrate it—prove it—adorn it, &c. Instead of purchasing a farrago of sermons, composed by others, and to be repeated by you, learn yourself to compose.

3. *Begin with easy subjects*. Take an easy piece of scripture history, or a plain tale of a miracle, and observe times, places, persons, circumstances, and so on. Nothing can be easier than to make a few pertinent remarks on each.

4. *Let your first essays be very short*. A division into two parts will be sufficient, examine these briefly, and with few or no ornaments.

5. *Exercise first in proper places*. Not only pronounce your discourse alone in your room, or in the field; but, the day before you preach, go alone into the place of

worship, where you are to preach; ascend the pulpit, familiarize yourself to the place, utter your discourse, &c. Preach in publick first in a village, among plain christians, &c.

6. *Take*, if you can find such a person, a *kind and judicious friend*, and get him to attend your first sermons, to remark and correct your defects, &c. The philosopher, Demonax, having heard a declaimer deliver his declamation improperly, advised him to exercise himself diligently. So I do, replied the youth, I every day declaim alone in my room. O, added the philosopher, I do not wonder you declaim so foolishly, since you have accustomed yourself to speak before only one fool of an auditor." Keckerman. *Rhet. Eccl. lib. ii. cap. post. xvii.*

(1) Compare the infidelity of the church of Rome with that of the Jews. Scripture useth this method. Jer. xxvi. 17, 18, 19, &c. The Elders said, Micah prophesied in the days of Hezekiah - - Did Heze-

may observe, that these answers are like ours to the Roman church, when they affirm, they are the church of God. As the apostle distinguisheth two Israels, one after the flesh, and the other after the spirit: so we distinguish two churches, one which is only so in outward profession before men, possessing the pulpits, the churches, and the schools; and the other which is the church in the sight of God, having a holy doctrine, and a lively faith. These answer precisely to the apostle's *Israel after the flesh, and Israel after the spirit*. As the apostle applies the promises of God, and their accomplishment, not to Israel after the flesh; but to the Israelites after the spirit; so we also apply the promises, which God has made to his church, not to those, who occupy the pulpits, the churches, and the schools: but to them, who believe and practice the  
pure

*Hezekiah, and all Judah put him to death? - - - Urijah prophesied against this city - - Jehoiakim slew him - - Nevertheless the hand of Abikam was with Jeremiah that they should not put him to death.*

Jeremiah used this manner of speaking. xxviii. 7, 8, 9. *Hananiah! hear thou what I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people. The prophets, that have been before me, and before thee of old, prophesied against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall it be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.*—xvi. 11, 12. *Your fathers for-*  
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*sook me, and ye have done worse than your fathers.—Our Lord used it. Luke xi. 47, 48. Your fathers killed the prophets, ye allow the deeds of your fathers.—S. Stephen too, Acts vii. 51, 52.—S. Paul also, 1 Cor. xi.—2 Cor. xi. 22. &c.*

As the holy scriptures were written for the continual use of all ages, so they exhibit an assortment of characters, that never die. The holy spirit, who has thoroughly furnished the man of God with a great variety, has also given him a caution concerning a comparison of them with living persons. Eccl. vii. 10.—i. 9, 10.



pure doctrine of the gospel. (2) As S. Paul defines the true people of God to be those, whom  
 God

(2) *The true church is distinguished not by occupying publick edifices: but by adhering to the pure gospel.* Mr. Claude seems to have imitated here Gregory of Nazianzen, who makes use of the same arguments against the domineering party of his day. Both are authorized by a thousand examples. Vid. *Greg. Nazianz. op. tom. i. orat. 25.*

Mr. Claude's *defence of the reformation*, one of the best-written books, that I ever had the happiness of reading, enters thoroughly into this subject, and discusses it in the most masterly manner imaginable. Mine is a most beautiful quarto edition in French, printed at Rouen 1673. I have seen an English edition in quarto: but I believe it is scarce, and I wish it were reprinted. Bayle, who was no incompetent judge, calls it "the best defence of the reformation, that either Mr. Claude, or any other protestant clergyman ever published." It is indeed an incomparable performance. It consists of 378 pages, and it appears to me neither to contain a line too much, nor to leave room for the reader to wish for one line more. The chapters, to which I more immediately refer, in regard

to the subject contained in the text above, are the fourth of the first part; and the first of the fourth part.

We said, a thousand examples authorized a separation from a domineering party. Thus the Israelites were necessarily dissenters in Egypt, and in Babylon. Lot in Sodom, Elimelech in Moab (Ruth i. 15.) Daniel, Shadrach, and others in Babylon, S. Paul, his fellow apostles, and primitive christians, at Athens, Rome, Ephesus, Jerusalem, and other places, were all of them nonconformists to the established religions of the several countries, which they inhabited. Egypt, in the time of Joseph, Persia in the days of Nehemiah, Babylon in the time of Daniel had not invented a test-act, nor had the dissenters there any temptation to occasional conformity for the sake of holding an office under government. *Here is wisdom. Let him, that hath understanding count—He had horns like a lamb, and he spake like a dragon—He causeth all to receive a mark—and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark.* Rev. xiii. 18, 11, 16, 17.

Dissenting ministers ought by all means to study the  
 doctrine

God by his electing love hath taken from among men ; so we define the true church by the same electing grace ; maintaining that the Lord has made

doctrine of *occasional conformity* for the sake of their wealthy members. The history of it affords a melancholy scene of duplicity, on the side of the first imposers, and of simplicity on the side of those, who submitted to it. Our divines, we know, have taken different sides on the question : but they who deny the lawfulness of it, I humbly conceive, have embraced the sincere, defensible side. The old pretences of charity to their dear brethren the imposing conformists, and of freeing themselves from a suspicion of schism, and such like, are all laid aside now ; and other new reasons are assigned : but never yet have I met with an argument for it, that was worth one rush. We set experience against a thousand sophisms ; for we have often seen occasional conformity lead to a corporation-feast, that to a set of Sunday acquaintances, in whose presence whole families blush at the names of their own ministers, people, ordinances, doctrines, and devotions, with whom, in short, there generally comes a long, a black et cetera. Family prayer is exchanged for guilt and Sunday-visits—the oracles of God for no-

vels and paltry books, that poison the morals of all the youth in the family—the plain habits of christians for the fantastick liveries of worldlings—the company of good men for that of slanderers, blasphemers, deists, and debauchees—piety and peace of conscience for pride and painful reflection—the confidence and esteem of a christian church for the ridicule and treachery of a tavern club. Miserable employment of the last days of an infatuated old sinner, stuffing a pillow with thorns to lay his throbbing head on, when he dies ! God forbid, we should say this is always the case : but we know what we have often seen.

Such casuists as first led our churches into this practice were very good men : but they would have rendered better service to their cause, had they been less credulous, and less servile. While they were pretending in awkward compliments to inform the world—that they considered themselves under “ *sacred obligations to adhere to their reverend fathers and brethren of the established church, to run all hazards, and to live and die together with them*—that indeed they were not

made all the excellent promises, with which scripture abounds, to his elect only, and that his elect are such as he has chosen according to his good plea-

*entirely, in every punctilio of the episcopal church—that they were called indeed nonconformists: but however no man conformed in every thing—that the first noncons had no design totally to abandon the established church—that they had held communion with both episcopal and nonconformist churches lawful—that the accidental consideration of a place, or office, since super-added had not made that unlawful, which they had accounted lawful before—that indeed it could not be thought that the judgment and practice of such occasional conformists could be throughout approved by their reverend fathers and brethren of the established church; but that neither did they pretend universally to approve of it themselves—that they had not the least suspicion, that persons of so excellent worth and christian temper as then presided over the established church would censure them for hypocrites: but would rather think them sincere persons of misinformed consciences—Indeed they humbly dissented from their reverend fathers: but however they arrogated nothing to themselves on that account—they could not avoid thinking themselves right in*

*dissenting: but they knew themselves to be far excelled by their reverend fathers in much greater and more important things—” - - I say, while these worthy men were curling their periods, and offering incense to episcopacy, they mistook their men, and were actually gulled out of their rights and privileges by old sharpers, whose bargains were better or worse according to the penetration or simplicity of those, who dealt with them. Had the ruling clergy of those times been, (heaven forefend the thought!) had they been jockeys instead of priests, and sold horses instead of acts, and canons, neither Howe nor Calamy should have gone to a fair to have purchased a nag for me. Lord Lansdowne said all in a word in a speech in the house of Lords in 1719. “The receiving of the Lord’s supper was never intended to be as a qualification for an office: but as an open declaration of being and remaining a sincere member of the church. Whoever presumes to receive it with any other view profanes it, and may be said to seek his promotion in this world, by eating and drinking his own damnation in the*



pleasure, without any regard to particular places, conditions, or qualifications among men. (3)

## XVII.

the next." See *Lansdowne. Bayle. Rem. F. Calamy's Life of Baxter. chap. xviii. Howe's Letter, &c.*

"*Lex valde iniqua, says our Pierce, qua facerrimum eucharistiæ in titutum pessime profanatur. Nefarii homines dissentientes iis irretirent laqueis.*" *Piercii vindiciæ. par. i. prop. fin.*

(3) *Comparison.* Archbishop Flechier has left a beautiful example in a sermon on Mat. xxv. 43. *I was in prison, and ye visited me not.* It is a charity-sermon for prisoners.

"Who are they? and what are we? they are debtors, criminals, and captives - - - who far from being pitied groan in their dungeons, and lie there victims to the interest, and perhaps to the passion and animosity of those, who retain them - - but are not you debtors to God for all the liberalities of his providence? &c. - - They are criminals, and are not you? Perhaps the transports of a blind, involuntary passion have hurried them into some disorder, which the law punishes: but do not you cherish in your hearts passions yet more dangerous, which the laws leave unpunished? You have not shed your brother's blood, but

how often have you wounded his reputation? how often have you troubled his rest by your inquietudes? how often have you abandoned him to poverty by your avarice? What difference is there between these miserable offenders and you, except that they bear the punishment of their sins, while you live in pleasure? they groan while you triumph, &c. - - in fine they are captives and prisoners, and has not the holy ghost told you, that *whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin?* Is there any heavier chain than an inveterate habit? What is the life of the greatest part of mankind but a continual slavery? We see various passions reign over them by succession; delivered from pride they are enslaved by avarice - - - thus men change their tyrants not their state, and the last avenges the excesses of the first. - - - What calamity is comparable to that of a prison? What words are lamentable enough sufficiently to paint a prisoner's misery? Shall I represent prisons to you as cursed regions, where there falls neither rain, nor dew? - - - shall I describe dungeons as sepulchres in which men are buried alive? - - - shall I shew you chil-

## XVII.

## REMARK THE DIFFERENCES OF WORDS AND ACTIONS ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS.

When a weak scrupulosity, or a tenderness of conscience was in question, which put some of the faithful upon eating only herbs, S. Paul exhorted the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak; *let not him, that eateth, despise him that eateth not, and let not him, which eateth not, judge him that eateth; for God hath received him.* Rom. xiv. 3. But when the same S. Paul speaks of false teachers, who wanted to impose a yoke on conscience, and who under pretext of meats and days were attempting to join Moses with Jesus Christ, as if christians were yet obliged to observe the ceremonial law: then the apostle has no patience with them, but condemns and anathematizes them, as people who preached another gospel, and exhorts the faithful to *stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* Gal. v. 1. (4)

So

dren mourning for the captivity of their fathers? fathers lamenting the poverty of their children? mothers disabled from watching over the conduct of their daughters, daughters incapable of contributing to the subsistence of their mothers? Many enemies to insult them, few, or no friends to comfort them, no charitable hands to relieve them! &c."

The whole is a most affecting picture of Jail-miseries,

apt to stir people up plentifully to relieve them, and carefully to avoid them: and compared with the state of a criminal before God, enslaved by his vices, and in his last moments abandoned by all to his miseries, how touching and useful the sight? *Flecher serm. tom. ii. Quatrieme Exh. pour les pris.*

(4) Remark different occasions. This rule regards what our divines call *seeming contradictions*, and is in general the

So again, when you find in the gospel, that Jesus Christ sometimes forbad his disciples to publish

the true conciliator of apparent inconsistencies. Saurin has a fine sermon on the uniformity of God in his conduct; in which he proves to a demonstration,—that God is of one mind—that his design in revelation is uniform—and that this uniformity of design necessarily produced a variety of dispensation. S. Paul had taken up this fine notion of the deity, 1 Cor. xii. and from him Saurin took it.

1. This principle affords proof of the divinity of *Christianity* in general, and of several of its *doctrines* in particular. It is the only system of theology, that provides for the felicity of man by harmonizing all the perfections of God with all visible appearances in the world of nature, in the ways of providence, and in the nature and conditions of mankind.

2. This doctrine reconciles seeming differences in *scripture*, by shewing that on different occasions it was proper to say and unsay, to allow and disallow, to establish an œconomy, and to dissolve it. Revelation contains a record of the laws, by which God's kingdom in various circumstances has been governed. In the patriarchal state one set of laws was ne-

cessary—in the mosaical another—and in the christian a third, different from both. Samuel *reasoned* with the Jews on this principle concerning *the righteous acts of the Lord* to them and to their fathers, 1 Sam. xii. 6, 15. According to him, kings, priests, prophets, ordinances, establishments, captivities, all were appointed for the producing of moral rectitude, or *obedience*, and, for the production of this, different treatment was necessary on different occasions.

3. The doctrines of *miracles*, *gifts*, *prophecies*, *visions*, *extraordinary revelations*, and such like, are all concerned in this article; for all these were occasional benefits, granted in special cases, and not to be perpetuated in the christian church.

4. Occasion is an article of consequence in *church-discipline*. We do not imagine, that the christian religion is alterable by us; we only say, there are in church-government certain obvious, large outlines, and there is a discretionary power lodged in christian societies to fill them up. For example, 2 Chron. xxx. 18. *A multitude of the people had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than was*  
written



publish the miracles, that he wrought, and to declare his divinity: and, at other times, that he ordered them to publish upon *the house-tops* what they

written—Ezra x. 10, 11, 9. *Ezra the priest stood up, and all the congregation made confession in the street trembling for the great rain*—Mat. xii. 4. *David ate the shew-bread, which it was not lawful to eat*—Mat. x. 27. Gal. ii. 2. *Speak in the light, preach upon the house tops. I communicated the gospel private'y*—Acts xvi. 33. *The jailer, and all his were baptized in the night.*

It has been a question with divines, whether if an ordinance were lost, baptism suppose, it could be revived, and who should be the administrator? Henry Lawrence, esq; the reverend Messrs. Spillsbury, Tombes, and others of our primitive English baptists affirm, that in such a case an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize, and so begin a reformation. Bp. Burnet says, the same question was debated in the established church at the reformation; we are sorry to add, it was too often debated on an old popish principle, *right to administer sacraments by an uninterrupted succession.* See *Crosby's Hist. of Baptists, vol. i. chap. 2.*

5. Occasion is, as our author shews, a source of in-

vention of arguments in preaching. To observe the occasion of a text is often the easiest way to arrive at the sense of it. The occasion of the sermon is often the best guide in the choice of a subject to supply it. Fast—thanksgivings—commemorations—ordinations—associations—farewells—funerals—Lord's suppers—church-meetings—all require discourses fitted to occasions, incidents, occurrences, &c.

There seem to me to be four ideas in the complex notion of a good controversialist, in regard to a dexterous, opportune use of the sword of the spirit. He will *give* no occasion to the adversary. 1 Tim. v. 14.—he will *cut off* occasion given by others, 2 Cor. xi. 12.—he will *seek* occasion to annoy his opponent, Jud. ix. 33. xiv. 4—He will *not use* this liberty for an occasion to the flesh, Gal. v. 13. Such a polemical divine was the great S. Paul, and he thereby obtained a right to say, I give you occasion to *glory* on my behalf. 2 Cor. v. 12.

*Him, that is weak in the faith, receive.* That is, say our best divines, receive him into *communion.* S. Paul treats in the xiv. of Romans of the doc-

they had *heard in private*, and to preach to *all nations* the mysteries of his kingdom; you must remark, that this difference is owing to different occasions. While Jesus Christ was upon earth, the mysteries of his kingdom were covered with the vail of his humiliation, it being necessary in some sense to conceal them: but after his exaltation, it became proper to publish them to the whole earth. (5)

The

doctrine of toleration, and in Galatians of that of imposition. Mr. Henry, therefore, well observes on this place, they were not differences of judgment, which did mischief in the primitive churches: but it was a mismanagement of those differences, that produced evil consequences. Some would not tolerate; and others would impose. It is a folly to call any thing imposed indifferent; for imposition makes it important.

*Stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free.* Jesus Christ left civil liberty in *statu quo*; the object of contemplation here, then, is *religious* liberty. Christ hath enfranchised his church, that is to say, he

hath freed it from the *curse* of the *moral* law, and from the *observation* of Jewish *polity*, or church-law. The church of Rome has wilfully subjected itself to a polity made up of Jewish and Pagan ceremonies, and is become, as Dr. Chandler has well expressed it, "a religion only fit for knaves and fools, who have sacrificed all the valuable interests of mankind, or have not sense sufficiently to prize them." See his excellent *serm. against popery* at Salter's hall, 1 Tim. iii. 15.

Of any church, that pretends to give liberty, and yet restrains freedom of thought by subscription to human creeds, it may be truly said,

———She hath *enfranchis'd* them  
Upon some other *pawn* for fealty.

*Shakespeare.*

In all such churches,

Placid subscribers *mortgage* their estate,

And *pawn* their best, and last-remaining piece of plate.

(5) *Teach all nations.* Mat. is hardly a passage of scripture to be produced of more

xxviii. 18, 19, 20. There

VOL. II.

A a

con-

The same diversity may be remarked in what the Lord Jesus said to the Canaanitish woman—that

consequence than this. It contains the *commission* given by our ascending king to his apostles. Our divines connect the words with Mark xvi. 17, 18. Luke xxiv. 49. and observe, they are divisible into several parts or clauses of the most beautiful simplicity, full of strong argument, and resistless motives of persuasion and acquiescence.—*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth—Go ye therefore into all the world—teach all nations—preach the gospel to every creature—Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I command you—baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved—He that believeth not shall be damned—Behold, I send the promise of my Father to you—Tarry ye at Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high—Signs shall follow them, that believe—In my name they shall cast out devils—they shall speak with new tongues—If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them—They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover—lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*

For the sublimity of the style of this commission see

*Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. ii. ch. 2.* And for the importance of it in regard to baptism, admission of members, and such like truths, *Dr. John Gale's sixth serm. 11 vol. of sermons.*

The Acts of the apostles is the best exposition of this glorious commission, for there we see by clear indubitable facts how they, who executed it, understood it. I call this an important passage, because, expounded by Acts, it decides innumerable questions in theology. Who is Christ, and by what authority does he act? He is an universal king, and his kingdom is allowed by his Father to extend over all persons and places—How did this king prove his right, and ascertain his dominion? By signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds—Did he consign over to his apostles a power of legislation? No, he ordered them to *teach* what he had commanded—Might the apostles teach and enjoin whatever he had not prohibited? They might not. They were to teach an observation of what he had positively instituted—Might they preach the gospel to sinners? To every rational creature in the whole world—Is the religion to be propagated



that he was *only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*—and that it was *not meet to give the children's bread to dogs*. This seems contrary to an almost infinite number of passages of scripture, which affirm, Jesus Christ is *the light of the Gentiles* (6)—

10

pagated local, national, partial? It is universal—May it be propagated by fire, and sword, and penal sanctions? It may not. It is to be spread by *teaching*—What is previously necessary to baptism? Profession of *faith* in the gospel—Is baptism a standing ordinance? It is an *injunction*, and has never been repealed, and herein it differs from *promises* of miraculous gifts, and portions of divine assistance, which depend on the discretion of the promiser—Does the christian system allow a preacher of the gospel to preach terror? He is to preach to *unbelievers*, and to denounce *damnation*—Is christianity to continue? To the *end* of the world—Is it to be continued by the mere aid of learning, reason, eloquence, &c.? The presence of *Christ* is to be superadded. These, and many other articles, *hold forth this word of life* to the special attention of a christian minister, and, by a proper regard to it, he *may rejoice in the day of Christ, that he hath not run in vain, nor laboured in vain*. Phil. ii. 16.

(6) *Light to the Gentiles*. Religious bigotry was the national sin of the Jews, they

affected an insignificant haughtiness in speaking of the rest of mankind, and called them *the nations, the gentiles, barbarians*, and so on. The first christians, being Jews by birth, bore the scandal of this national sin, after they had imbibed the benevolent spirit of the gospel. The curt, and sometimes obscure style of Tacitus, has given occasion to several learned men to dispute the meaning of his well-known expression, *odio humani generis convicti sunt*. (Annal. l. xv. c. 44.) Some think, he means to say, *All mankind hated Christians*; others think, it should be understood, *Christians hated all mankind*. The latter seems most natural, and agreeable to his design; for, it is plain, he is speaking of what he called an *execrable superstition*, taught by Christ a Jew, and practised by Jewish followers. The description does not fit christians: but it does Jews, who were raving mad, on account of that association of Gentiles with Jews, which christianity proposed to make. S. Paul describes them in the same manner. 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. *They killed the Lord*

to him shall the gathering of the people be. These and all other such passages will perfectly agree, if you

*Jesus—and their own prophets—they persecute us—they please not God—they are the enemies of all mankind—they forbid us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved.*

Dr. Sclater, one of our old divines, remarks, not improperly, on this place, that “all, who hinder the preaching of the gospel are to be reputed capital enemies to all mankind, by depriving people of the greatest good.” There is a great deal of meaning in this expression. The evident design of the gospel is to produce the universal social felicity of all mankind. Now the felicity of intelligent beings cannot be produced without the removal of ignorance, vice, and insensibility, the three chief causes of human misery. In order to remove these, the gospel gives us a set of just true notions—a class of virtues—and powerful motives to engage us to admit the first and to practise the last. But these three remedies, contained in the gospel, are to be conveyed out of the book into the man; for as they lie in the letter they operate nothing. Now this is the work of a gospel minister, as an instrument in the hand of the holy spirit; and he, who considers the

production of the greatest social good as the pole-star of his ministry, will not greatly err in executing it. His aim will be to give light to them, who sit in darkness; to displace confusion, to establish order, and to impel men to action by proper motives.

There seem to be four great objects, which deserve the attention of such a man. 1. *Persecution.* He, who persecutes a christian minister for preaching the gospel, ought to be reputed an enemy of mankind. 2. What *restrains freedom of thought*, without which no man can form principles of his own, is an inimical invasion of the rights of all mankind. 3. Tedious repetitions of *human rituals* in divine worship, crowding the preaching of the divine word up into a corner to make room for human inventions, are on the same side against the rational intelligent rights of all men. 4. Obliging all ministers to preach by *any one set of rules*, of grammar, rhetorick, theological phraseology, and so on, deserves to be classed with the former acts of hostility. The first of these crimes takes away the *light*—the second wounds the *eye*, that should see in it—the third shews

you distinguish time, and occasion. While Jesus Christ was upon earth, he was *the minister of the circum-*

shews that object in *ten minutes* only, which cannot be understood without the attention of an *hour*—and the fourth precludes the benefit to be derived from seeing the object, by confining it to a *fixed point*, at which indeed some eyes can see it best: but where others cannot possibly see it at all. In a plan aiming simply at the felicity of our fellow-creatures, there is neither grammar nor rhetoric, phraseology, propriety, system, nor sense: but the information, sanctification, and salvation of the auditors is all in all. Propriety in a barn may be impropriety in a cathedral; but if it inform, sanctify, and save a soul in a barn, it ought to pass for propriety; for it is in effect sense, system, learning and all.

It has been a fashion with some divines to divide their sermons by *figure*. The Spanish preachers have delighted much in this method, and some of them have laid down rules for preaching thus. The preacher is going to fill his auditors with disgust with sin. In order to this he takes a text, that dissuades from sin in general. In his introduction he calls sin *disease*, and then treats of various vices

under the notion of bodily disorders. An auditor seems to be in a county hospital, and the chaplain leads him from ward to ward, from bed to bed, and lectures him at every pause. This is not a method of preaching I should choose, however, I am sometimes edified by it; and I never dare presume to prescribe the method, for it may be easiest to some auditors to come at the ideas of the preacher by means of such figures, and if they be informed, and their felicity produced, the end is answered, the chaplain and I are happy in seeing it, and thus we approve of what we do not like. Give the gentiles *light*: that is all.

Cardinal Borromeus, in his oration to the clergy of Milan, at opening his sixth provincial council, delivered his ideas in this manner. “Acts xx. 28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, &c.* Two things we must attend to—the present *sick* state of the diocese—and the *medicines* proper for recovering the patients committed to our care. Let us consider the province as one large hospital. See, *pride* is a spiritual *dropsy*—The *concupiscence* of youth is a high *fever*—*Drunkenness* is *madness*—

Some



*circumcision*, as S. Paul speaks, that is, his personal

Some are *leprous*—others *paralytic*—some are *lame*—others *dumb*—some *deaf*—others *blind*—&c. These diseases, dangerous in patients, are intolerable in *physicians*, clerical blindness, lameness, &c. are insufferable." This is really a good discourse, and a great many just and adequate ideas are taught under images in themselves disagreeable: but in their effects, perchance, not so. *Past. Instruct. Carol. Borromæi, orat. vi.*

Let us judge thus of our own divines, who have exposed religious knowledge to view, 1. Under *medical* images.—Preservative or *triacle*, [treacle] against the poyson of Pelagius. By Dr. Will. Turner, 1551.—Discovery of ten English *lepers*, very noisom to the church—1. A schismaticke. 2. A church-robber. 3. A simoniacke, &c. By Tho. Timme, 1592.—The sick man's *salve*, &c. By Tho. Becon, 1591.—A weapon-*salve* for the church's sores. Stillingfleet.—The *Anatomy* of the Masse, 1555.

2. *Musical* images.—*Harmony* from heaven—*Song* of Simeon, Luke ii. 29.—*Trumphet* of the soul, Eccl. xi. 9. By Hen. Smith, 1595.—The *upbidding* of the Mass, written in meeter, 1555.—David's

*Harp*. Exp. 115 Psalm. Tho. Becon, 1567.—*Dromme* of doomes-day.

3. *Natural* images—Seven *Sobs* of a sorrowful soul. Will. Hunnis, 1578. Seven penitential psalms in metre—*Hive* full of *honey*. Genesis in metre.—Handful of *bonni-suckles*—*Diamond* of devotion. Fleming, 1580.

4. *Trade* images. The *craft* for to die, 1506—*Heavenly thrift*, Luke viii. 18. Christ. Shutte. 1577.—The ripping up of the pope's *fardel*, (a fardel was a pedlar's pack.)—The *way to wealth*, by Rob. Crowley, 1550.

There would be no end of transcribing titles. *Mirrors*—*looking glasses*—*spying glasses*—*spectacles* for blind papists—*pathways*—*ladders*—*doors*—*pats* for preachers—*alarms* for sinners—*cordials* for saints—*combats* with the devil—and *poisons* for the pope—These were the names of some of the artillery, with which our ancestors besieged courts and pulpits, synods and schools, then occupied by papists, and with which they actually drove them thence. I feel a sacred awe at beholding the venerable old instruments, "stirring up dialogues between *Lent* and *liberty*—deliberate answers to prove papists antichristian *schismatics*

nal ministerial commission was only to the Jews :  
but

*tikes*—and apologies for those dog of hell charged with  
Englishe preachers, which false *doctrine*." I love to hear  
Cerberus, the three-headed them sing,

" God save the king, and speed the plough,  
And send the *prelates* care inough,  
Inough, inough, inough."

See *Maunfell's Catalogue*.  
*Crowley, Pierce Plowman, &c.*

Our ancestors had certainly  
a very high opinion of their  
own productions ; they called  
them *demonstrative* orations—  
*defensative* expositions—*piti-*  
*ous* lamentations—*faithful* de-  
finitions—*godly* exercises—  
*right* godly injunctions—*right*  
godly and *learned* tractations  
—*singular* meditations—*golden*  
collections—*sweet* and com-  
fortable *things* for the poor  
soul—*ghostly* persuasions—*se-*  
*raphical* questions—and *di-*  
*vine* responses—*jewels* of joy  
—*castles* of comfort—*potations*  
for Lent—and *pomanders* for  
Easter—profitable books for  
man's *soul*, and right com-  
fortable for the *body* ; to all  
which we add our devotional  
wish : May inflexible criti-  
cism never summon you into  
court ! There are in the  
house where I write this se-  
veral good fires, and candles  
in proportion, to the no small  
comfort of the family this  
snowy evening : but I protest,  
I believe, were a man to trace  
them to their origin, he  
would travel from candle to  
candle, from fire to fire, till  
he arrived at Mrs. Cook's

black tinder-box, that stands  
in a sooty hole in the kitchen  
chimney. Venerable flint  
and steel, tinder and tin !  
Parent of all this light and  
heat ! Peace be with you !

(7) *Observe occasions*. The  
abuse of any thing will justify  
a preacher in decrying on  
one occasion what on another  
he would recommend, "there  
are two reasons of disgust  
with *knowledge*. 1. The little  
progress, which they make,  
who carry their investigations  
farthest. In proportion to  
the advance, that we make  
in this wide field, we disco-  
ver new and unbounded  
spaces, or, shall I say, new  
abysses beyond our skill to  
fathom ? the more we are  
nourished in the deep *pasture*  
of human science the more  
hungry we are ; *the eye is ne-*  
*ver satisfied with seeing, nor*  
*the ear with hearing, and of*  
*making many books there is no*  
*end*.

2. The little justice, that  
is rendered in the world to  
those, who excel in know-  
ledge, is another reason of  
disgust. *He, that increaseth*  
*knowledge, increaseth sorrow ;*  
*it happeneth to me even as to a*  
*fool*.

but when he was exalted to glory, his ministry extended over the whole earth. (7)

*fool.* Yes, after you have devoted your youth, injured your health, and spent your fortune to inform your own mind, and to enable you to inform those of others, *it will happen to you even as it happeneth to a fool.* You will be told, sciences are unworthy the pursuits of a man of quality. A Plebeian, who sets up for a man of quality, will tell you, a man of birth and breeding should aspire at something more noble than questions of jurisprudence, cases of conscience, and expositions of scripture. You will be told, there does not require so much knowledge to shine in political stations, and to judge upon tribunals concerning the fortunes and lives of your fellow-citizens. Young presumptuous lads will pass a final judgment upon your discourses, and will say, with a decisive tone, *this is not solid, that is superficial.* The superiority of your knowledge will raise up against you a world of ignoramuses, who will affirm, that you corrupt youth, when you would guard them against prejudices: that you strike at orthodoxy, when

you endeavour to heal the wounds, which pedantry and persecution have given it: that you trouble society, when you would purify morality, subjecting to its holy laws the great as well as the small, magistrates as well as subjects. In a word both in church and state they will prefer novices before you, novices hardly worthy to be your disciples.

Happy idiots! who, intoxicated with vanity, and inclosed in a circle of idiots like yourselves, inhale the smoke of their incense, after you have been stupified with your own. You, who affect bombastick phrases, hoist the sails of your swelling eloquence, and sail before a fair wind into this ocean of glory. You, whose superb nonsense, whose stale common-places, whose pedantick systems have gained you a reputation of knowledge and erudition, your condition appears often to me preferable to that of the most refined geniusses, the most consummate scholars. Ah! *it happeneth to me as to a fool, I have hated this life, &c.*" Saurin. *serm. tom. xii. sur le degout du monde.*



## XVIII.

## CONTRAST WORDS AND ACTIONS. (8)

Thus you may oppose the agonies and terrors, which seized Jesus Christ at the approach of death, against

(8) *Contrast words and actions.* This is, as our author presently expresses it, one of the finest topicks of illustration. There is no end of the utility of it in theology. It illustrates *revolution* by contrasting it with all systems of *natural* religion. *Never man spake like this man.* John vii. 46.—It illustrates *christianity* by placing it opposite to *Judaism*. *Ye are not come to mount Sinai: but ye are come to mount Zion.* Heb. xii. 18, 22.—It distinguisheth *true ministers* of Christ from *pretenders*. *We are not as many who corrupt the word of God: but we speak as of God.* 2 Cor. ii. 17. xi, &c.—It displays the beauty of a *true church* by comparing it with the deformity of *false religion*. Of Mohammedism, popery, and all political religions it may safely be asked, *what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* 2 Cor. vi. 16.—It is of excellent use in preaching the *law*, by contrasting what men *are* with what they *ought to be*. 2 Pet. iii. 11.—It is excellently adapted to *comfort* by comparing the wisdom of provi-

dence with the folly of him, who complains of it; the sufficiency of *pardon*ing mercy with the abundance of a sinner's unworthiness; the pleasures of *piety* with the amusements of sin; the privileges of a *saint* with the licentiousness of a sinner; the aids of the *holy spirit* with the efforts of the tempter; the joys beyond *death* with the agonies of dying—It is useful to recover a *backslider*, by comparing his present state with a former state. *Did I appear to the house of thy father?* &c. 1 Sam. ii. 27. xv. 17. Jer. ii. 2, 5, 20, &c. Ezek. xvi. Gal. iii. 1, 4. &c. In these, and in a thousand other cases, contrast is lovely beyond conception, and scripture abounds with it.

Contrasts may be taken from *person*, What God hath cleansed, call not *thou* [homuncio] common, Acts x. 15.—from *place*, Pass over the *isles*, send unto Kedar, and see, hath a nation changed their idols: but *my people* [in Judea] have changed their glory. Jer. ii. 10, 11.—from *time—relation*—&c. &c.

against the constancy and joy of the martyrs, who flew to martyrdom as to a victory. This contrariety of emotions is accounted for by the difference of the persons. Jesus Christ was the mediator of men towards God, bearing their sins, and engaging with the eternal justice of his father: but the martyrs were believers, reconciled to God, fighting under Christ's banner, and as mystical soldiers maintaining his righteous claims. One was filled with a sense of God's wrath against men: the others were filled with a sense of his love. Christ met death as an armed enemy; and as one who, till that time, had a right to triumph over mankind: but martyrs approached him as a vanquished enemy, or rather as an enemy reconciled, who having changed his nature was become favourable to men. In one word Jesus Christ was at war with death: whereas death was at peace and in friendship with the martyrs. (9)

In

Contrast is said to lead to the curt, *sententious* style. The book of proverbs abounds with examples: but unless the contrast be quite clear, the style will become obscure by contrast. Some contrasts must be *explained*. Thus, *I would thou wert cold or hot.* Rev. iii. 15. The doctrine of this passage is, as one observes, that "vice mixed with virtue is more dangerous to society than vice alone." He explains this passage, then, by "Lev. xiii. The man free from leprosy, and the man all leprous might go about freely, The first could not infect, the

last would be avoided: but he, who had a spreading leprosy to all appearance, and who yet had some favourable symptoms, must be confined, lest he should communicate infection. The text, then, speaks of three sorts of men, the zealous, the profane, and the lukewarm. These must be contrasted in order to prove the last the most dangerous minister in the church." *Gilbert Abbas serm. 32. ap. Eman. Thesaur. de sac. concion.*

(9) *Contrast the death of Christ with the deaths of martyrs.* Many of our divines urge this argument with great

In general, we may affirm, that contrast is one of the most beautiful topicks of christian rhetorick; and

great force in proof of the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction for sin. I confess, I never met with any tolerable account of the terror of Christ in view of death, commonly called his *agony*, his *cup*, Luke xxii. 44. 42. except in that system, which goes on the doctrine of atonement. Innocence had no cause to fear on its own account, and yet Christ had more terror in dying than any of his followers. He did not, however, expire in terror: but, having cried with a loud voice *IT IS FINISHED*, bowed his head, and yielded up his holy soul all placid and serene to God his Father.

(1) *Contrasts are striking.* One of the finest modern contrasts, that I have seen, is that of Bp. Massillon in one of his advent sermons, *pour le jour des morts*. The subject is death. The text Rev. xiv. 13. The whole sermon, except exordium and conclusion, which are short, consists of two, what shall I call them, pictures, or originals? The one is a description of a *dying saint*, the other that of an *expiring sinner*. I dare not attempt to translate them. They are inimitably beautiful. Each departing soul reflects coolly on the past, attends to present condition,

and looks forward to futurity. What sources of joy to the one, and of misery to the other!

*Contrasts must be natural.* That is to say, they must arise out of a real opposition, founded in the nature of things, and not out of fanciful, artificial oppositions, which owe their existence to the genius of the preacher. Young ministers are very apt to affect *the striking* in their first essays, and this leads them into licentious antitheses, false points of wit, comical associations of terms, and sometimes false doctrine. In those cases *speechification* produces *strikingification*: but what becomes of edification? It is easy to affect: but to touch the passions properly, and to purposes worthy of a sober mind, is not so very easy. I am struck at seeing a rope-dancer exhibit; for, not having the honour of knowing the principles of his art, I am every moment afraid he should fall, and break his neck. I should be very differently stricken, should a long lost female friend, with penetration in her eye, sensibility in her features, and gracefulness in all her steps, unexpectedly enter my room. I should be no longer myself. I should



and that which furnishes the most striking illustrations. Great care, however, must be taken, that the

freely, and instantly give myself up to the emotions of my heart, forget that I existed, and when I recovered my senses find myself bathing in felicity in the bosom of my friend. Thus unexpected truths strike: but they must appear truths to do so. Prudence and genius, versatility and gravity must unite to form a good contrast.

*Contrasts must be easy to be comprehended.* Some divines, and those of the church of Rome above all others, deal out contrast very profusely for the sake of gaining attention. Thus one began his sermon, on an Ash Wednesday. "If the gospel read to day command me to *set my affections on things above*, how is it, Rome! that you require me to attend to dust and ashes? The gospel says, *Rise*; the church bids me *stoop*! The gospel bids me *look up*; the church says *Look down*! &c. &c." After a long proposing of these opposites, the preacher solves the difficulty by proving, that repentance and humiliation lead to elevation and felicity. *Panigerola apud Eman. Thesaur. de sac. conc.*

This method is very commonly trite and trifling; and, if it be often repeated, it loses all its little force. The religion of the church of Rome asso-

ciates the oddest things in the world; and their preachers often bring *Ave Maria* and the *text* together by violent jerks. Our divines, however, being not necessitated to work literary miracles to keep legends and lies in company with the sober truths of religion, are often naturally led to strike the attention of their auditors by just contrasts. Thus, the late pious Mr. Walker of Truro began a sermon on these words, *Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord*, Rev. xiv. 13. - - After a pause, he exclaimed, "How! - - Blessed are the dead! - - Blessed are the DEAD! - - No surely - - - Blessed are the living; for they possess—the power of gratifying their *sensual appetites*—the means of cherishing their *passions*—opportunities of pursuing *lawful business*—advantages of *intellectual attainments*—Are not these the blessed? - - Hear S. John. *Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord*. They enjoy advantages superior to all these." This introduction was greatly admired. It struck at once the attention of the audience, and a plan of discussion for the preacher.

In like manner, we might say, "Phil. i. 1. *Paul to the saints at Philippi* - - - Tell

the oppositions be natural, easy to comprehend, and properly placed in a full, clear, light. (1)

## XIX.

Tell me freely, brethren! have I not discovered my ignorance or imprudence in the choice of my text? - - - Paul writes to *saints* - - - Alas! my auditors! this letter is not directed to some of you! - - - Were your moral state to be expressed in apostolical addresses, they must run, Paul to *drunkards* - - - Peter to *blasphemers* - - James to *Atheists* and *Deists* - - John to *hypocrites* and *Pharisees* - - However, I abide by my choice, and I am going to justify S. Paul, by proving—that intemperance, ignorance, obstinacy, and duplicity incapacitate men for profiting by scripture—and that a certain purity of mind is previously necessary to our edification.

Thus again, *Diotrephes* *loweth* to have the pre-eminence, John iii. 9. - - - And does not *Diotrephes* deserve praise for this? Perhaps he aims to excel in *knowledge* - - Perhaps he wishes to attain superior degrees of *piety* - - Perhaps he would be exemplarily holy in all manner of godliness, in *humility*—*prudence*—*patience*—*benevolence*, and so on - - Ah! nothing of all this. His haughty soul is content to continue void of all these excellencies. He is even a determined

enemy to them, and is now casting *Gaius* and *Demetrius*, yea the inspired writings of S. John out of the church. See this ignorant, impious, singularly wicked image of *Lucifer*, aspiring to set his throne above the stars of God, and elevating himself on the ruins of religion. Let us consider these two subjects, the inthronization of *human* will, and the sacred *equality* taught by S. John, and for this purpose let us contrast the authority—the nature—the spirit—and the end of both.

*Contrasts must be well-placed.*

They produce fine effects every where: but the finest, I presume to guess, in *conclusions*. Moses, collecting at the close of his ministry all his fire and force, charged the Israelites to place the  *blessings* on mount *Gerizim*, and the  *curses* on mount *Ebal*, and to let them stand in contrast for popular edification, Deut. xxxvii. 11, 12, 13. Christian ministers often imitate him, and any subject will admit of it. Thus Cardinal Borromeus closes his second oration to his clergy. “God, your offended judge, says, If ye be seers by office, how is it ye are blind in practice? If I appointed you to feed my flocks, why do

you

XIX.

EXAMINE THE GROUNDS, OR CAUSES OF AN ACTION OR AN EXPRESSION; AND SHEW THE TRUTH OR EQUITY OF IT.

For example. When the incarnation of Jesus Christ is in question, as in this text, *The word was made flesh*, you may recur to the foundations of this truth, as revealed in scripture, in order to shew that a divine person did take upon him real true humanity, in opposition to the notions of some ancient hereticks, who imagined, that the human nature of Christ was only apparent. (2) For this purpose, you must look into the ancient prophecies for such passages as attribute two natures, the human and divine, to the one person of the Messiah. To the same purpose you may also apply new-testament texts, which speak of the same subject; and you may farther observe such reasons of this singular œconomy, as theology furnisheth, and

you suffer them to perish for hunger? If ye be the salt of the earth, where is your savour? If ye be the light of the world, why do ye suffer people to sit in darkness? If I appointed you to be my mouth, why are ye dumb? If ye be unequal to your duty, why are ye so ambitious as to hold your offices? If equal to it, why do ye not discharge it? The fire of the prophets, the precepts of the gospel, the examples of the apostles, religion, piety, the state of the

church; the terrible day of judgment, endless rewards, and everlasting woes, are all these nothing to you! *Past. instruct. orat. concil. ii. Card. Borrom.*

(2) *Some hereticks denied Christ's real humanity. Gnosticks, Apollinarians, &c. Epiphan. Hæres. xxvi. 76, 77. Soc. Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 46.*

Hooker rightly says, "Errors in this article of faith, are either from *dividing* the person, which is but one, or *confounding* the natures, which are two. *Hook. Eccl. Pol.*



and which are taken from the design of our salvation. (3)

In

(3) *Examine the ground of an expression or action, and shew the equity of it.* Two things are necessary here.

1. A *fact* must be ascertained.  
2. The *principles* of it must be investigated. The bare mention of this subject shews the necessity of caution.

1. A fact may be *supposed*, which is not true. A certain person affirmed, baptism was essential to salvation, and thought he proved his position by adding, Jesus Christ says, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, AND IS NOT BAPTIZED, shall be damned.* Mark xvi. 16. No, replied his opponent, Jesus Christ never said so.

2. A fact may be ascertained, and the *principles* of it may be declared. *I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.* Phil. iii. 8. I give up all by choice; for I have studied both subjects, and prefer Christianity with all its disadvantages.

3. A fact may be ascertained, and it may be proper to *conceal* the principles of it. *Jesus said unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread? This he said to prove him; for he himself knew what he would*

*do.* John vi. 5, 6. See xiii. 27, 28, 6, 7.

4. Principles are sometimes best urged by *implication*. Thus 1 Cor. iv. We are stewards—you ought to give us credit for fidelity—you affect to doubt our principles—Well, defer your judgment of our hearts till the Lord shall judge the world—and now examine our actions, *we are made a spectacle to the world*, and so on.

5. A fact may be ascertained, the principles of it may be pretty clear, and yet circumstances may make it proper for observers only to *query*. His majesty, James I. ordered his “ambassadors to advise the states of Holland to beware in time of heretical preachers, and not to suffer them to creep into their state. His principal meaning,” he is pleased to add, “was of Arminius, who was lately dead.” Query, What could induce his majesty to guard the united provinces against the creeping of a dead man?

His majesty complains of fate, and says, “It was our *hard hap* not to heare of this Arminius before he was dead.” Query, What could a defender of British episcopal faith have done in a Dutch

In like manner, when you treat of the *resurrection* of Christ, or his *ascension* to heaven, you must take this topick, and shew the fidelity and credibility of the testimony borne by his apostles. Your argument may be established by observing what followed

Dutch presbyterian church, had it been his *first hap* to have heard of Arminius during his life? His majesty is pleased to inform the states, both in Latin and English, that he is “a christian king, the defender of the faith, keeper and avenger of both the tables of the law, and nursing father of the church; and as such, that he requires a book written by professor Vorstius to be burned, and he leaves it to their christian wisdom to determine whether ever any heretique better deserved to be burned than the author himself.” Query, Do nursing fathers burn their children? Old Betty shall nurse mine then.

His majesty thought proper to dedicate this book “*To the honour of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, The eternal Sonne of the eternal Father*” and to style himself “*His most humble, and most obliged servant, James by the Grace of God king of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, Defender of the faith.*” Query, Was God Almighty’s most obliged humble servant free from presumption? *Declar. against Vorstius, 1612.*

Verily, it is not fair for kings to write on religious controversies. The fate, that makes them kings, obligeth them to be impartial, and prohibits their throwing their weight into either scale. God forbid, said a musician once to a prince, your majesty should understand musick as well as I do! With much more reason may divines say so of polemical divinity. Few royal authors have gained any laurels in these encounters. Many have rendered themselves ridiculous by attempting to do so. James I. was laughed at by such as dare laugh during his life, and all Europe has done it since the expulsion of his family. His clergy called him *Solomon*, and he was Solomon enough to believe them. Some of the courtiers of the French king were one day calling him so before his majesty. Yes, said Lewis, his majesty is a Solomon. He is the son of David the sidler, and he writes pamphlets on religion! Bp. Burnet calls him the meanest prince, that ever sat upon a throne. *Hist. of House of Stuart, James I.*

lowed his resurrection and ascension; as the effusion of the spirit, the abolition of the empire of the devil and his idols, the conversion of whole nations to the worship of the one true God, miracles, prophecies, &c.

The same method is proper, when some *predictions* are your subjects, as the destruction of Jerusalem, and the rejection of the Jews: for you may either narrate history to shew the *execution*, or you may reason upon the subject to shew how wonderful the divine *wisdom* was in that dispensation; the whole will evince the truth of the predictions. (4)

I said also, the grounds and causes of an action or expression might be examined to *shew the equity and truth* of either. This principally takes place, when any thing surprizing and uncommon is in question; for such things at first seem to shock the minds of auditors; or when you are pressing home

(4) *Evince by investigating causes.* To this topick this sermon of Massillon must be referred, “ First, What are the secret causes of our revolt against the will of God? 2. What are the advantages which accompany submission to his holy will? Whence is it, that we never will what God wills? Yet whence is it, that there is so much comfort and delight in willing only what he wills? Our rebellion against the divine will proceeds from a *vain reason*, which rashly condemns what it cannot comprehend. 2. It is owing to *self-love*, which inclines us

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to refer every thing to ourselves, and which condemns any thing, that does not enter into our views and schemes of happiness. 3. It proceeds from a *false notion of virtue*, which substitutes useless desires after what God does not require of us in the place of duties, which his holy will does impose on us. 4. The advantages of submission arise from a quiet *confiding* in God for future things—an *acquiescence* in his will under present embarrassments—and a deliverance from useless *regrets* concerning the past. *Mass. Myst. pour la purific. de la S. vierge.*



home an exhortation to the practice of any duty, which cannot be performed without difficulty. For example. The Pharisees complain in the gospel, that the disciples of Christ did *not keep the traditions of the elders*. In order to justify the disciples, shew the foundations of Christian liberty, and remark, that the true worship of God does not consist in the observation of external ceremonies, much less in the observation of human traditions and customs : but it consists of true piety, real inward holiness, and actual obedience to the commandments of God. (5)

So

(5) *Shew the grounds of Christian liberty.* No subject requires more attention than this at present in our churches. It ought to be well studied, and thoroughly investigated; for, (I am sorry to say so.) there is a world of collusion among divines in this article. They give us one liberty in their *books*, and another in *practice*. Ask a papist to define christian liberty in theory, and he will tell you, “vera hominis libertas in hoc consistit, ut homo ea solum agat, quæ secundum rationis imperium agenda veniunt.” *Joan. Segobienfis. de Prædic. Evang. lib. ii. ii.*

This is very plausible; but, the mischief is, the canonists and the courts in real practice expound it of the infallible reason of the *pope*. The episcopal church of England proposes to give its members liberty, and to allow them to determine all

debates by *scripture*. However, we should be taken in were we to expect these fine professions to be realized in actual practice. Between college and church there lie several expository deeds to be executed, all essential to an entrance into the latter. In all these, not the scriptures as God gave them : but the scriptures *as expounded* by certain articles ; not the church as Christ and his apostles left it : but the church of England *as established*, are the objects of contemplation. You have the liberty of refusal : but then you must purchase religious liberty by resigning some of your civil rights as a man, and a Briton. The boasted ALLIANCE of some churches with some states resembles an alliance between a good husband and a bad wife. The servants under both adore their master, pity and praise him, and eke

So again, when Jesus Christ, after he had healed the paralytick man, commanded him to *sin no more lest a worse thing come unto him.* You must go to the grounds of the expreffion to shew its equity. Now these are, that some sins had drawn the wrath of God upon him before—that if he continued in them that wrath would certainly return—that the favours, which we receive from God, engage us to glorify him by good works, &c. (6) This topick is of great use in explaining the commandments of the law, the

eke his vixen partner. The old coachman reads Gen. iii. 17. and says his prayers in the hayloft.—The butler admires the first chapter of Esther, and particularly the last verse—The groom, who understands prophecies, applies our Lord's epistle to the bishop of Thyatira, Rev. ii. 18, &c. to the case of the family—and the chaplain, who understands latin, and never intends to marry, sings Polyphemus's love-song.

Our Cartwright, for the puritans, affirmed at the reformation, "we meane not to take awaye the authoritie of the civile magistrate, to whom we wishe all blessednesse, and for the increase of whose godlinesse we daily praye: but that *Christ* being restored into *his* kingdome, may rule in the *same* by the scepter of his *word*." Whitgift replied, for the episcopallians, "Christ ruleth in *his* church by the *godlie* ma-

gistrate." The *godlinesse* of Hen. VIII. and Q. Elizabeth were not to be disputed. Whitgift knew that, and so did Cartwright. The first therefore published for *proofs* glosses of S. Austin, and S. Jerom, and the last was forced to content himself with *writing* in the margin of his opponent's books against all such arguments—"non valet consequentia—ad rem nihil affert—Hieronymus non est in istis rebus arbiter et judex." I have Whitgift's book with many such marginal notes, all written in Cartwright's own hand.

(6) *Behold! thou art made whole.* Ου γαρ ειπεν, ιδε υγιη σε επομισα, αλλ' υγιης γεγονας μηκετι αμαρτανε. και παλιν, ουκ ειπεν, ινα μη σε κολασω, αλλ' ινα μη χειρον τι σοι γενηται, απροσωπως αμφοτερα τιδεις, και δεικνυς χαριτος μαλλον εσαν την υγιειαν η της αξιας \* γαρ ενεφηνεν οτι την αξιαν  
C c 2 δους

the equity of which must be made to appear; for it must be proved, that they are all founded in nature, and have an inviolable fitness in the order of things.

In short, it is proper to take this method with all exhortations to piety, charity, &c. which are found in scripture. In order to persuade people to the practice of them, their fitness must be shewed, by opening the grounds, reasons, and principles of our obligations to the practice of all these virtues. (7) XX.

δους απηλλαγη διην, αλλ οτι  
ΦΙΛΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΑ εσωζετο.  
*Chrysost. in Joann. v. 14.*  
14. *Homil. 38. tom. ii.*

(7) *Show reasons for the practice of virtue*—Thus Masfillon persuades to a life of piety, though accompanied with many disgustful circumstances. “*Then the Jews took up stones to stone him.* John x. 31. These were the returns of gratitude, which Jesus Christ received of men; these the consolations, with which heaven permitted him to be exercised in the painful course of his ministry. At one time, they treated him as a Samaritan, as one that had a devil; at another, *they took up stones to stone him*: and thus the son of God passed the whole time of his life, always exposed to the most obstinate contradictions, meeting with almost none but such as were insensible of his benefits, and rebellious against his preaching, and all this without his letting

fall the least sign of impatience, or the least complaint.

But must I add? we, my brethren! we his members and disciples, alas! the smallest disgusts, the least oppositions we meet with in the practice of piety offend our delicacy! Nothing is to be heard but complaining and murmuring, when we cease to taste those pleasing attractions, which render duty delight. Tossed and distressed, we are almost tempted to abandon God, and return to the world as to a gentler, and more convenient master; in short, we would have nothing but comforts and pleasures in the service of God!

But we ought to abide in a course of obedience, though we do meet with disgusts: Because, 1. Disgusts are inevitable in *this life*. 2. Those of *piety* are not so bitter as we imagine. 3. They are less than those of the *world*.

And



## XX.

REMARK THE GOOD AND BAD IN EXPRESSIONS  
AND ACTIONS. (8)

This topick is of very great use in explaining the histories recorded in the gospel, where you will frequently find actions and words, which may be called *mixt*; because, in general, they proceed from some good principles, and, in particular, they have a good deal of weakness and infirmity in

And lastly, let them be as great as they may, pious people have *resources*, which worldlings have not." *Maff. Careme. tom. iv. pour le mecredi de la sem. de passion.*

This beautiful topick is exemplified every day by such divines as bend their attention to prove the *reasonableness* of christianity—the reasonableness of observing a *sabbath*—the fitness of *morality* to the felicity of a *state*—a *family*—a *person*, &c.—the *agreement* of religious and civil liberty, &c. &c.

(8) *Remark the good and bad in expressions and actions.* Our author confines his pupil to *actions* and *expressions*: but some improve his rule into observations on single words, single letters, and points. I think they have not specified the important meanings of those various dots, flourishes, slips, &c. those *lusu[m] literarioru[m] codicu[m] manuscriptoru[m]*

those sprays of the pen, may I call them? which manuscripts more or less contain. The Jewish Rabbies affirm, "non est in lege vel unum *litera*, a qua non montes magni dependeant." Many Christian divines, after them, affirm, "ne *iota* quidem, aut *apicem* in scripturis frustra exaratum," and they call themselves viros *doctissimos* for saying so. Vid. *Hakspanii Sylloge. Philolog. Gen. xvii. 14.*

Where scholars only mean to divert themselves with orthographical wit, and for this purpose play tricks with a point, genius sparkles, boys play at push-pin, and grave men pass by and smile: but when such puerilities are seriously proposed, and made grounds of faith and practice, the matter becomes very consequential, and must be fully examined. We have in several places cursorily observed this subject, as it affects divinity.

in them. If you would explain Mat. xvi. 22. *Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee.* You may observe what there is good and what bad in this expression of S. Peter. 1. You see herein his *love* to his master; for his not being able to bear the discourse of Jesus Christ concerning his sufferings at Jerusalem could only proceed from his ardent affection to him. 2. Herein appears not that cold and lukewarm regard, which  
most

vinity. See vol. i. p. 32, 33, 85, 292, 293. See the notes at the bottoms of these pages. At present we only add one example. S. P. Q. R. signify *the senate and the people of Rome*. No, says a Sibyl, these four letters contain a prophecy, that the Roman church shall be the head of all other churches; for they signify *Serva Populum Quem Redemisti*.—They mean, says Bede, that the Goths will be defeated in all their attempts to take the city; for they stand for, *Stultus Populus Querit Romam*—Protestants affirm, that the letters direct them to subvert popery for the publick good, *Sublato Papa, Quietum Regnum*.—No such thing, say the papists, *Salus Papæ Quies Romæ*. I said, I would adduce only one example here. I will keep my word: but I could exemplify this futility by many a theological trifle, polemical, practical, and historical, from the *Tau* of the

fathers down the I. H. S. of their sons: nor would it be unjust in this case to visit the sins of the fathers upon their children. Should any one think proper to write on this subject, he could not give his book a properer title than this of A. B. R. A. C. A. D. A. B. R. A. or, if this be antiscriptural, S. H. I. B. B. O. L. E. T. H. So much for the good and bad in *points, accents, letters, and single terms* in theological matters.

*Remark the good and bad in expressions.* That is to say, study the *subject* expressed, and distinguish the properties of its component parts. The *Sapientia Joco-seria* runs all on this topick, and collectors of it may furnish divines with many sober arguments.—“It is excellent to have an *enemy*; for his vigilance makes us cautious. *Plutarch*—It is more safe to hear a barbarian than an *orator*; for orators can disguise by adding, subtracting,  
ex-

most men have for one another, but a most *lively* affection, interesting him for his master, an affection full of tenderness, which could not even bear to hear a word, or entertain a thought about the death of Jesus Christ. 3. You may observe an *honest freedom*, which put him upon freely addressing Jesus Christ himself, using that familiar access, which his condescension allowed his disciples, without a mixture of mean and despicable timidity. 4. You see, in fine, a strong *faith* in his master's power, as by addressing him he seems persuaded, that it depended only on himself to suffer or not to suffer. *Lord, be it far from thee, this shall not be unto thee.* (9) Now, all these are good dispositions. Here follow the *bad* ones. 1. Peter discovers gross *ignorance* of the ways of divine wisdom in

extenuating, amplifying, and can make black appear white. *Joan. Pic. Mirand.*—Flattery is a fine art; for it conciliates friends and enemies, and he, who knows not how to flatter, knows not how to converse. *Stephan Gauzza*—Folly is preferable to wisdom; for a fool is neither plagued with the questions of friends, nor the envy of enemies. *Eras.*—It is glorious to be *envied*; for virtue excites envy, and envy increaseth virtue. *Casper Dornavius*—*Casp. Dornav. Amphitheat. Sapien. Joco-seriæ, tom. ii.*

Ruth. i. 15. *Return my daughter to your gods.* Do you know what it will cost you to become a proselyte to my religion?—1 Kings xix. 20.

*Go back, and kiss your father and mother; for what have I done to you?* Have I, by calling you to be a prophet, weakened your obligations to social duties?—Act xvi. 27, 28. *The Jailor would have killed himself: but Paul cried, Do thyself no harm.* Believe the gospel, and profess it; you may be put to death for your profession: but the guilt and damage of suicide do not enter into the case of a martyr.—See Mat. xvi. 24, 25, 26, 27. John xxi. 23. Luke xx. 22, &c. x. 20. ix. 50, &c. John xiii. 13, &c.

(9) *Be it far from thee! Spare thyself. Propitius tibi. subaud. sit deus. locutio Hebræis familiaris. Ne malum id eveniat avertat Deus. Id absit a te Domine; sic aliquo-*  
ties



in sending Jesus Christ into the world; for he does not seem yet to know, that Jesus Christ must needs suffer, and with this ignorance the Lord reproaches him in the next verse. *Thou savourest* (1) *not*

ties usurpant lxx. interp. Vide Gen. xliii. 23. *Ιλεως υμιν μη φοβεισθε ο θεος υμων, &c.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. *Ιλεως μοι κυριε τε ποιησα τε το.* 1 Chron. xi. 19. *Ιλεως μοι ο θεος τε ποιησα το ρημα τε το.*

(1) *Savourest* φρονειν τα τε τινος, pro cum aliquo sentire est phralis frequens apud græcos scriptores. Vid. Rom. viii. 5. φρονεσιν, we render it to mind. To mind is an old English verb, signifying to mark—to put in mind—to regard with affection. Hence the old phrase *a month's mind* for a vehement desire. Fisher, Bp. of Rochester, preached the funeral sermon of Lady Margaret, Mother of Hen. VII. “*at the moneth minde of*” the said Lady. Baker of S. John’s republished this sermon in 1708, with a very large preface, and in his own book of this edition, lent me by my most worthy friend, the present reverend orator of the university of Cambridge, he has entered with his own hand many marginal notes, and, among the rest, he has written opposite to the title-page “*month’s mind for the two Dukes of Suffolk.* See Strype’s Eccles. Memorials, vol. ii. page 281.” Baker’s affection for Fisher arose from

what he imagined a similarity of circumstances. Fisher refused the oath of supremacy, and lost his life. Baker was a nonjuror, and lost his fellowship. The present Rev. Dr. Goddard, master of Clare-hall, who knew him well, told me, that Baker refused the oath required to be taken at the revolution: but was winked at, and enjoyed his fellowship till the accession of the present royal family, when he was ejected. Then the famous Mat. Prior gave him the profits of his fellowship, which he did not want for himself, on which Baker subsisted in college till his death.

*Thou savourest not the things, that be of God.* Our blessed Lord was entirely master of his subject, and he had a right to deliver his sentiments concerning it: but there are a thousand cases, which fall under the notice of ministers, in treating which they may distinguish facts, and affirm, this is a good action, that is a bad one: but they cannot proceed farther, and assign the hidden motives of the heart in these actions, for they are known to God alone. In cases where the motives of the heart are rendered pretty clear

not the things, which are of God: but those, which are of men. 2. His love to his master had something

clear by actions, prudence may sometimes require silence. For example.

1. In *church-history*, which it becomes a divine to study, facts are clear, and make a ground of reasoning: although motives be passed by. All through the reign of Edward VI. liberty of conscience was granted to foreigners. "Ad vos, ceu ad asylum et portum tutissimum, sub sanctissimi regis alas, confluebant Germani, Galli, Hispani, Itali, Poloni, Scoti, ut illic Deo suo in fidei libertate fervirent, quam ipsis patria ingrata negabat." *Gualteri præfat. in 1. ep. D. Pauli ad Corinth.*

The Dutch had the church of Austin Friars assigned them, and John a Lasco was their minister. Saxons, and other High Germans had the same liberty, and so had the Italians, who had Bernardine, and Michael Angelo Florio for ministers. Valerandus Pollanus was pastor of a Walloon congregation at Glastonbury. French protestants, and Spaniards had the same freedom. There were also French and Walloon churches at Canterbury, Sandwich, Norwich, Colchester, &c. They preached their own doctrines, performed their own rites, and prac-

tised their own discipline. Latimer pleaded their cause in his sermons. Cranmer procured orders of council for them. And the crown not only tolerated them in England: but actually pensioned some of their great men abroad. John Sleidan had 200 crowns a year, and Justus Jonas had a similar pension. Queen Elizabeth's protection of all sorts of refugees rendered her so odious to the pope, that he assigns this in the bull of her excommunication as one reason for his censure. It was the practice of the English court, during her majesty's long reign, not only to allow liberty of conscience to refugees in England: but even to afford powerful aids to such as were persecuted for religion abroad, and who, in their native countries had taken up arms against their own sovereigns for the defence of their religious liberties. Witness France and Holland. In later times, the British court has shewn itself of the most tolerant disposition. England as well as Holland and Prussia published invitations to refugees, and acts of naturalization. Her majesty Q. Ann gave 12000*l.* to the relief of French refugees in 1705. The Protestant

thing merely human and *carnal* in it, since he only considered the preservation of his temporal life, and concerned himself only about his body, instead

tant Palatines tasted of the same bounty in 1709. All the nation relieved their necessities, and the bishops, agreeably to their orders and their interest, forwarded the briefs, and excited the charity of all the kingdom. Here, then, is one fact.

But, lo! here follows another equally true. This same England, so liberal to foreigners, refuseth the same liberty to natives. Cranmer compliments Calvin at Geneva, and burns Ann Askewe in England. Q. Elizabeth assists French protestants, and persecutes English puritans of the same religion at home. Our most gracious queen allows a part of her bounty to French presbyterian masters for training French children in presbyterian principles; and at the same time commands English presbyterians to put their children to episcopal schoolmasters to be taught hierarchical principles. Comical exhibition! Foreigners sailing to England for religious liberty, and hailing in their passage British vessels freighted with English men, women, and children, bearing away for America in search of the same blessing! Here is a second fact.

A third follows. John a Lasco endeavoured to move the protector to grant a settlement in England to foreigners by "arguments as well taken from *Policy* as charity, namely that hereby a *trade* and a gainful manufacture would be introduced into England." (Styrype mem. Cranmer.) The naturalisation act, April 3, 1709, begins by asserting that the *power* and *wealth* of a nation are increased by an increase of subjects. The placart of the states of Holland and West Friesland begins by declaring that the *grandeur* and *prosperity* of a country generally consists in the multitude of its inhabitants, that foreign refugees had contributed to the increase of *trade*, *manufactures*, and *publick wealth*: July 18, 1709. The edict of his Prussian majesty, dated May 13, 1709, hints more covertly the same subject. This is a third fact.

Now what shall we do with these facts? Shall we, with some divines, take only the first, and set out full cry, Kings, Queens, Bishops and Burgomasters *favour the things of God!* King Edward was a *godlye empe!* Queene Elizabeth's majesties highnesse was a *jewel of joye!* The most high



instead of elevating his mind to that superior glory of Jesus Christ, which was to follow his sufferings,  
or

high and mighty princes of the arbitrary house of Stuart were by the grace of God most dreadfully gracious defenders of the *faith*, nursing-fathers, and nursing-mothers of the church of God! - - - Softly over the stones. I hate to be gulled. I said divines had done this: but why should they alone bear the blame? Authors of all sorts, in those days, swept all their subjects and cleansed them from Antihierarchic notions, and garnished their title pages, addreses and dedications, with theological positions, that the reigning prince was "by divine providence a powerful protector of the *faith*, and undoubted religion of the *Messiah*, most comfortable nursing parent of the Israel of God, in the British isles." Their works were printed *cum privilegio*, remember! See *Norden's Speculum*.

Shall we take the second fact alone, and affirm with infidels, princes and priests are all politicians: bishops are atheists in judgment, and spaniels in practice: No priest ever *savour'd the things of God*? God forbid!

The most just and equal use of these three facts is this. Put all the three into one scale, and sit down coolly,

and weigh some other facts against them. It is the only method of finding out the real value of them, as for example.

Here is one. Some foreign divines have spoken in the highest terms of English bishops, anglican religious liberty and church-polity. Gualter at Zurich called Cranmer, on account of his attachment to it, *the immortal glory of England*. Probably Ann Askew, and the Baptists thought, a little *money* would purchase a deal of praise from some men. Who that deserved praise at home, would think himself obliged to import it from abroad?

Here is a second fact. The clergy at home, warm friends to one kind of imputed righteousness, have had the conscience to place all the tolerant actions of the civil powers to the account of episcopacy. One dying archbishop of Canterbury, (on whose soul Jesu have mercy!) said, and another said after him, "The Church of England hath been a shelter to other neighbouring churches, when a storm hath driven upon them." Had I a witch of Endor at hand, I would give her a trifle to relate the following true tale to the *old man covered with a mantle*. There

or considering the great work of man's salvation; to perform which he came into the world. 3. You may

was at Canterbury in 1697, a church of French protestants of the presbyterian denomination. In this church there were a Stephen du Thoy, a Claude Rondeau, a Doctor Simon, and several other members, who adopted Socinian principles, and, to avoid excommunication, which their synod threatened, professed themselves members of the episcopal church of England, and received the sacrament in their parish churches. The Reverend James Rondeau, and Mr. Souverain subscribed and took oaths, and were beneficed in the church by his grace of Canterbury. Being off their guard, and declaring, they signed confessions of faith only as articles of peace, and that they did not understand them, some of their quondam friends of the synod along with some episcopal clergy prepared the spiritual artillery of the church against them. Finding out that the Archbishop only waited for an opportunity to censure them, they appeared before the civil magistrates at Canterbury on Sept. 9, 1697, and renouncing episcopacy declared themselves dissenters, and took refuge under the act of toleration. The next day the Reverend James

Rondeau opened a nonconformist meeting by preaching from Gen. xxviii. 17. *This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!* I ask, who sheltered these foreigners from penal laws for conscience-sake, the episcopal church, or the state? *Speak ye, that sit in judgment. YE delivered us from the noise of archers, and we rehearse YOUR righteous acts towards the inhabitants of the villages of Israel.* Yes, our hearts are towards OUR CIVIL GOVERNORS! *Lettres & Mem. sur un schisme a Canterbury, Bounty of the Queen to the Palatines, printed 1709.*

Here is a third fact. Greatly as we celebrate our own fame for possessing the most tolerant dispositions, and for being the best constituted church in the world, all foreigners do not think with us. The marquis de Bougy, a French refugee, procured comparisons of the privileges granted by Prussia, Holland, and England, in order to determine the flight of exiles. Mr. Claude was consulted on this head concerning a settlement in Carolina, or in some of the colonies, under the protection of his Britannick majesty; and he was also consulted concerning the episcopal treat-

may also remark a troublesome and criminal *boldness*. He means to be wiser than Jesus Christ. *Peter took him* (2) says the evangelist, *and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee.* Rash attempt! as if Peter were called into the counsel of God and Jesus Christ his son to give his opinion concerning this grand affair. 4. It even seems as if Peter, hearing Christ speak of his sufferings, imagined, this discourse proceeded only from his fear of death, and from a mean timidity; for he aims to encourage and comfort him as we do persons whose fears exceed the bounds of reason. *Lord!*  
says

treatment of English nonconformists, which he exceedingly disapproved. On all these articles foreigners spoke freely. See *Lettres de Mons. Claude*, tom. v. *Dissert. curieuse sur naturalisations.*

I must not add more facts, much less may I presume to say, who SAVOURS power—who favours money—who favours the temporal things of God—and who the spirit and genius of his gospel: but I may affirm, young ministers will find good and bad facts in church-history, and they should weigh all before they pronounce the worth of any.

(2) *Took him.* Took him *aside* say some; took him *by the hand* say others. *He embraced him* says Grotius. This last seems well to agree with the place; and the same word so rendered Philem. 17. would aptly express the apostle's meaning.

(3) *Example of discussing the good and bad in words and actions.* On this runs Mr. Saurin's sermon on *transient devotions.* From Hos. vi. 4. *What shall I do to thee Ephraim? what shall I do to thee Judah? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.* "This transient devotion, of which the text speaks, is not hypocrisy. Hypocrisy cannot suspend for a single moment the strokes of divine justice: yea it is less likely to extinguish the fire of divine anger than to inflame it. God does not use this tender language to hypocrites, *what shall I do to thee Ephraim?* but on the contrary, *wo be to you hypocrites.*

Nor is it the feeble piety of a tottering Christian. However imperfect his piety may be, it is, however, real; and it would be too severe to say of this piety, it is like  
the



says he, *be it far from thee, this shall not be to thee*, as if he had said to him, Do not afflict yourself, your apprehensions of death are groundless, nothing of this is like to happen to you. (3)

## XXI.

*the early dew and goeth away* - - - but it is between these two dispositions. It does not go so far as the latter: but it goes farther than the former. It is sincere, so it is superior to hypocrisy; but it is fruitless, and so it is inferior even to weak piety. It is sufficient to discover sin; but not to correct it. It can promise sincerely: but it does not perform. It weeps: but it doth not break off bad habits. It is a certain religion of times, circumstances, &c. and owes its birth frequently to publick calamities, to solemn fasts or festivals, or to the approach of death; but it frequently vanishes with the causes, which produced it, &c. &c. All the images, which the Lord useth in the scriptures to make himself known to us, those, which are taken from our infirmities, our passions, our love, and our hatred, are too imperfect to represent a God too far elevated above men to be represented by any thing human. Yet all these images have a reality, which agrees to the supreme being in an eminent manner, in a manner proportioned to his dignity. God represents himself here as a prince, who

had formed a close connection with one of his subjects. This subject appears sensible of the honour done him. The prince signalizes his esteem by a profusion of benefits. The subject abuses them. The prince reproaches him. He is hardened. To reproaches have been added threatnings, threatnings have been followed by suspension of favours. The subject is touched, affected, reanimated. The prince receives the penitent with open arms, and crowns his return with redoubled acts of kindness. The ungrateful subject abuses them again. The prince again reproaches him, again threatens him, and suspends again the effects of his love. To remove the same misery the subject uses the same means, and avails himself of the liberty of returning, which the goodness of his prince allows him, and again he returns. The prince yet pities and again pardons his relenting ingrate: but this perfidious subject, slighting the tenderness of his master, falls so often into this ungrateful behaviour, that the prince becomes a prey to a thousand opposite thoughts, he feels himself divided be-

tween

## XXI.

## SUPPOSE THINGS.

This topick is principally useful in controversy. (4) For example. When you are speaking of the merit of good works, you may take this

tween the fear of rewarding ingratitude, and punishing fidelity. This image is most certainly infinitely beneath God, however it is that image, which he hath chosen to employ. *What shall I do to thee Ephraim? Ephraim, Judah, why do ye rend my heart alternately by your vices and virtues? Why do ye not suffer me either wholly to give myself to you, or wholly to detach my affections from you? why do ye not let me give a free course either to my justice or love? Either let me glorify myself by your return, or by your ruin? Your devotions tie my hands, your crimes inflame my wrath. Shall I destroy a people, who have recourse to my clemency? Shall I preserve a people, who violate my laws? What shall I do to thee Ephraim? What shall I do to thee Judah? for thy goodness is as a morning-cloud, and like the early dew it goeth away."* Saur. *ser. tom. ii. sur les devotions pass gères.*

(4) *Suppositions are principally useful in controversy. Nothing elucidates a subject*

more than this manner of discussing it: but then the suppositions must not be fanciful; but well grounded. I will give examples of both.

A certain writer published in 1664 a pamphlet entitled *The Quakers unmasked*, and applied to the people so called, 1 Sam. xiv. 15. thus translated, *And there was trembling, or QUAKING in the host, in the field, and among the people: the garrisons and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth QUAKED; so it was a very great trembling, or QUAKING.* Now, how could these words operate against the English people, called quakers, unless we suppose that the Philistine army in the text were religious quakers, and that the English protestants so nick-named were, like the philistine quakers, doomed to be destroyed by any Saul, or Jonathan, who should take it into his head to kill them?

This furious writer affirmed, that the English quakers were the spawn of *Romish frogs, Jesuites, and Franciscan friars.*

this way of supposition, and say, Let us suppose, that Jesus Christ and his apostles held the doctrines of the church of Rome, and that they believed, men merited eternal life by their good works: let us suppose, that they intended to teach us this doctrine in the gospels and epistles, tell me, I beseech you, if upon this supposition (which is precisely what our adversaries pretend.) they ought to have affirmed what they have. Tell me, pray, do you believe yourself well and sufficiently instructed in the doctrine of the merit of good works, when you are told, *when you have done all these things,*

*friers.* No, replied John Audland, one of the injured friends, "we came to Bristol from the *north*, we were born in Westmoreland, and have never been out of England." O, rejoined their opposer, "your coming out of the *north* is a shrewd argument of your badness. The Latin proverb saith, *Omne malum ab Aquilone*, and the English adage is, All evil comes from the *north*, and the scripture informs us Jer. i. 14. *Out of the north an evil shall break forth*—iv. 6. *I will bring evil out of the north*—vi. 1. *Evil appeareth out of the north*—22. *Behold a people cometh from the north-country*." As all our writer's reasoning on these passages *supposes* the prophet speaking of the *north* of England, Audland very properly, as he expresses it, "*unmasked him, detected him, and took him with a LYX in his*

*mouth*." Quak. unmask'd by Will. Prynn of Swainswick, esq.

Gen. iii. 15. *The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head, and thou [the serpent] shalt bruise his heel*. "If we *suppose* our first parents to understand these words literally; and that God meant them so to be understood, this passage must appear absolutely ridiculous. Do but imagine that you see God coming to judge the offenders; Adam and Eve before him in the utmost distress; that you hear God inflicting pains, and sorrows, and misery, and death upon the first of human race; and that in the midst of all this scene of woe and great calamity, you hear God foretelling with great solemnity a very trivial accident that should sometimes happen in the world: that serpents would be apt to bite men



*things, we are unprofitable servants? (5) Again, when the example of a miserable publican is proposed to you, who prays, God be merciful to me a sinner, who smites his breast, and dares not lift his eyes to heaven; when he is placed in opposition to a pharisee, glorying in his works; and when you are informed, the first went down to his house justified rather than the other—when you are told, if it be by grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; if it be by works, it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work; when you are told, you are saved by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God—when you are assured, you are justified freely by grace, through the redemption, that is in Christ Jesus, not of works lest any man should boast—when you hear, that to him that worketh not, but believeth on him,*

men by the heels, and that men would be apt to revenge themselves by striking them on the head. In the name of God what has *this* trifle to do with the *loss of mankind*, with the corruption of the *natural and moral world*, and the *ruin of all the glory and happiness of the creation*? Great comfort it was to Adam, doubtless, after telling him, that his days shall be short and full of misery, and his end without hope, to let him know, that he should now and then knock a snake on the head, but not even that without paying dear for his poor victory, for the snake should often bite him by the heel. Adam, surely, could not un-

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derstand this prophecy in this sense, though some of his sons have so understood it; a plain indication how much more some men are concerned to maintain a literal interpretation of scripture, than they are to make it speak common sense." Dean Sherlock's use and intent of prophecy. Disc. 3.

This excellent writer abounds with elucidating *suppositions* in the discourses and dissertations above quoted, and the whole book exemplifies the rule laid down by Mons. Claude, in a very just and beautiful manner.

(5) *When ye have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants. Cum feceritis omnia, si fecerit; nemo enim*

E e ad

*him, that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness—when you are taught to believe, the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life (6)—tell me, I once more intreat you,*  
can

ad perfectionem pervenire in hac vita possit; *conditionaliter* autem loquitur Christus, *si possibile esset* omnia quæ debuistis, fecisse, tamen vos servos inutiles, vel nihil promereri agnoscere debetis.

*Servi inutiles sumus.* Non absolute, sed comparatione facta ad servos, qui pecularia præscripta non tantum exsequuntur: sed noctu diuque summa alacritate, et cum suo incommodo, negotiis herilibus attendunt; non enim semel, aut etiam sæpius officio perfuncti, cessare debemus, sed continuo in bono pergere, quamdiu in hac vita agimus: *a Deo hoc accepimus quod habemus, et sumus, et possumus, nec ulla suppetat superbiendi, aut gloriandi materia.* Luke xvii. 10.

(6) *Doctrine of merit.* Some divines have so little opinion of merit in a plan of redemption, that they think, the incarnation and merit of *Christ* was arbitrary, and not essentially necessary in the nature of things. This was the notion S. Basil had of redemption, and he has several followers. “*Poterat quidem sine etiam incarnatione salutem conferre: sed voluit ut natura, &c.*” S. Basil. Seleuc.

*Ep. Orat. in S. Deiparam, apud Combef. tom. xi.*

Others think their *own* merit necessary to recommend them to God. “True, Lord! says Patricius, I am a sinner, ΑΛΛ’ ευγνωμονῶ τον δεσποτην. Very well, replies the Lord, a great reward is laid up in heaven for your good works.” This is precisely the notion of many moderns. They weigh down vice with virtue, and make a balance in their own favour. *De mirac. dominic. imaginis in putio Mag. Eccles. apud Combef. tom. i.*

Some imagine, the merits of others necessary. Hence the doctrine of supererogation, relicks, &c. &c. We are not to suppose, however, that all in the Greek and Roman church depend on the merits of others. “*Dig I cannot, to beg I am ashamed.* Life is short. Dig now, for, if you would in the next world, you cannot: nor can you beg. The merits of one cannot profit another. No sleepy virgin’s lamp can be supplied from the oil of another.” S. Asterii Amasice *Episc. ομιλ. περι οικου. της αβικιας, apud Combef. tom. i.*

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can you persuade yourself, that Jesus Christ and his apostles, by all *these* means, intended to teach you, that man acquires justification, and a right to eternal life by the merit of his works? (7)

You

The same might be shewn of the Roman divines: but the reformed churches alone profess and really practise the scripture plan. They perform good works—deny the merit of them in regard to God—and depending on the merit of Christ conciliate that with the free mercy of God.

*The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, προσευχόμενος ἑαυτῷ* pro καὶ ἑαυτῷ vel apud se, i. e. totus in se ipsum versus sibi tantum intentus, et nihil nisi se ipsum spectans.

*Prayed προσευχόμενος* nomine generalius accepto; comprehenditur id omne quo Deum compellamus; hic autem id genus quod *doxologia* dicitur denotari videtur.

*I pay tithes of all I possess.* Non illa tantum ex quibus vulgus ad literam legis solvere solet, ut poma et fruges terræ: sed et ea quæ controversi sunt juris, putà minora olera, ova, lac, &c. potius commodis meis aliquid detrahens, quam traditiones patrum minimo transgrederer. Non hic a Deo remissionem petit peccatorum; non virtutum augmentum, quasi harum culmen assecutus esset, nec majore Dei gratia opus habuisset.

*Be merciful to me a sinner.* Sensus hujus precationis ex toto Psalmo li. desumptus; verba quidem hic sunt pauca, tum luctu, tum verecundia vocem reprimente.

*Justified.* Sc. in sensu forensi, a peccatis absolutis, vel magis acceptus, &c. &c. Luke xviii. 13.

*If it be of works it is no more of grace, otherwise grace is no more grace.* Non habet rationem gratiæ, sed mercedis potius; meritum enim et gratia se mutuo destruunt. elegans antanaclasis. Rom. vi. 6.

*The wages of sin.* Debita merces: *μισθία* vox origine latina, proprie dicitur *piscis assus*; deinde per synecdochen speciei quodvis edulium quod *pani* additur; postea per synecdochen catechresticam *stipendium militare*, quod apud veteres partim frumento, partim pecunia constabat; et per metaphoram mercedis loco *miseriam et pœnam* designat. Rom. vi. 23.

(7) *Make doctrinal suppositions.* Bishop Massillon's sermon on Christ's divinity is formed upon this plan, "the glory and spirit of the ministry of Jesus Christ, both prove his divinity. *If Jesus Christ were only a mere man,*



You may also make such suppositions in morality (8) as well as in controversy, in order to give greater

I. The *glory* of his ministry would be an inevitable occasion of idolatry to us, and God himself would be chargeable with the error of those, who worship him.

II. The *spirit* of his ministry would become a dreadful snare to our innocence.

I. *The glory of his ministry.*

1. An illustrious person was expected by all mankind.

2. Promised by the prophets.

3. When Christ appeared, his birth, life, miracles, &c. were all grand, glorious, and unheard-of, and all corresponded with prophecy.

II. *The spirit of his ministry.*

1. He preached and practised holiness, as even they, who deny his divinity, own. 2. The world received numberless advantages in consequence of his coming. 3. He foretold many events since fulfilled. If then we own the truth of the bible we must own his divinity." It is only disguising this masterly defence of Christ's divinity to speak of it as the bounds prescribed me permit. I transcribe such skeletons with regret; nor would I attempt to abridge such sermons at all, unless I entertained hopes of stirring up in such as have not seen them a desire to peruse them. I allow, so little makes a God in this

fallen church of Rome, that arguments for *Christ's* divinity come in general with an ill grace from a papist's pen: but this sermon is an exception. This sermon and one of Mr. Saurin's on the same subject have answered my enquiries concerning Christ's divinity more satisfactorily than all I ever read beside: perhaps because they are short and plain. *Mass. Sermon. Advent. pour la circoncision.*

(8) You may make suppositions in morality. The following example from Heb.

xi. 1. *Faith is the evidence of things not seen*, in a sermon of a Professor of Divinity at Geneva, is of this kind. "The word *ελεγχος* signifies an argument, or a proof, which when good may be said to render a matter evident, to give it demonstration. *Persuasion* of the truth of a fact is analogous to *fight*, Abraham thus *saw* Christ's day. Hence comes the efficacy of Christian faith. *Suppose* 1. Ye saw the sufferings of hell, when sin attacks you, would ye dare to yield to temptation for the sake of pleasure? 2. *Suppose* ye were admitted for a little while to the felicity of *heaven*, would ye part with it for temporal gain? 3. *Suppose* God, with all the magnificent ensigns of

greater weight to your exhortations. (9)

XXII.

of his glory visible to you, would ye venture to offend him? 4. *Suppose* the day of judgment come, and yourselves on trial, should ye have any inclination to sin? 5. *Suppose* yourselves dying, would ye wish to stupify yourselves by finning? Now faith presents all these objects to those, who believe the gospel, with as much vivacity, as if they were present and visible; faith therefore *prevents sin*." The preacher proceeds to shew that faith also *produceth holiness*. The above example regards the rule of *supposition*, we do not propose it as a pattern of *regular arrangement*. *Sermons par Antoine Leger a Geneve, tom. i. S. 1.*

When suppositions are made grounds of moral action, they ought not only to be true in themselves: but they should be made to appear to be applicable to the action enforced. There is a great deal of duplicity in the frequent management of this article. For example, In the year 1685 the papal clergy in France, finding themselves neither able to defeat the protestant clergy, nor even to make a tolerable excuse for the abuses in their own religion, drew up in a general assembly - "a complaint TO THE KING against the calumnies, with which the

pretended reformed loaded them in their books and sermons." This curious complaint, signed by sixty-five prelates and their creatures, they presented to the king. To this they subjoined a confession of faith, containing the doctrine of their church, according to the council of Trent. In a left hand column stands each article of their faith, and in the opposite right hand column quotations from protestant writers, charging them with heterodoxy. The first calumniating author quoted is Professor Whitaker of Cambridge, in England. The second is Downam bishop of Derry, in Ireland. The last is Beza of Geneva. Ye holy jugglers! could your master *suppose*, think ye, all *most christian* as he was, could he suppose, that his peaceable protestant subjects at *Paris* were to be blamed for English, Irish, and all other *foreign* calumniators? The very editions quoted were not printed in *France*: but at London, Geneva, &c. - - - Ah! we understand you. *Delenda est Carthago! Voyez Pleinte de L'Assemb. Gen. du Clerg. de France.*

(9) *Make suppositions to answer moral ends.* Thus Mr. Saurin on Peter's first sermon to the Jews, Acts ii. *When they heard these things they were*

## XXII.

## GUARD AGAINST OBJECTIONS.

There are very few texts of scripture where this topick may not be made use of, and it is neediefs  
to

were pricked in the heart, and said—Men and brethren what shall we do? - - - You cannot call to mind S. Peter's sermon without envying the primitive Christians the precious advantage of hearing this preacher, and without saying to yourselves, how would such exhortations have penetrated our hearts? - - - but, my brethren, will you allow me to ask you one question? Should you like to hear these apostolick men? Would you attend their sermons? And, to say all in one word, do you wish S. Peter was now in this pulpit? Pause a little before you answer this question. - - Compare the taste of this auditory with the genius of such a preacher, your timorous delicacy with that noble liberty which made him speak so powerfully against the vices of his own times. For our parts we, who think we know you very well, we are convinced, that no preacher would be less agreeable to you than S. Peter—of all the discourses that can be addressed to you, there would perhaps be none less favour-

ably received than such as should be formed upon the plan of this, which this apostle preached at Jerusalem.

One wants in every sermon to discover some new truth, and, under pretence of satisfying the laudable desire of improving in knowledge, seeks to be diverted where he ought to be censured. Another wishes, we would please him, and would have us adorn our discourses, not in order to gain a more easy access to his heart, not to enable us by an innocent artifice to make use of his love of pleasure to destroy the love of inordinate pleasure itself: but to flatter a kind of frivolousness, which people love to have indulged till a devotional exercise is finished, when they may plunge into more sensual joys. Almost all desire to be amused, and lulled asleep; and if nobody is so gross as to say, Flatter my evil habits, stupify my conscience, praise my crimes, there is almost no one who does not wish it in effect. A principle of I know not what refined security makes us desire to be  
cen-



to mention examples, they will occur to every one

censured to a certain degree, so that the receiving of a light emotion may make us presume that we have practised the duties of repentance, and yield us an assurance, which we could not possibly have obtained by hearing encomiums on our vices. We would have the wound touched, but not probed. We like the application of emollients, but cannot bear to have the fire and the knife go to the bottom of the wound.

Ah how little would the apostles have preached in your taste! figure to yourselves those holy men ascending this pulpit, after having walked in your publick places, after having known your domestick secrets, after having seen through the coverings of certain criminal actions, after having been informed of certain mysteries, which I dare not even name, and of certain splendid crimes committed in the face of the sun. Do you imagine, that, knowing all these, these holy men would have studied to gratify your taste for preaching, and have submitted to those laws, which you choose to impose on your preachers? Would they, think ye, have gratified your curiosity by curious disquisitions? Would they, think ye, have conjured you not to despair? Do ye think they would have been content to have told you in a

vague and superficial manner, that you must be virtuous? Would they have finished their sermons by pathetically exhorting you not to form the least doubt concerning your salvation? Ah, my brethren! methinks I hear these holy men animated with the same spirit which made them say with so much boldness to the murderers of Christ, *you have taken this holy Jesus and with wicked hands have crucified and slain him*, methinks I hear S. Peter, &c. &c. *Saurin ser. pour la pentecote, tom. v.*

My apology for such long extracts from Monsieur Saurin is perhaps weak enough; it is my fondness for that writer, of him methinks I can say as one of Socrates, *και γαρ το μεμνησθαι Σωκρατους, και αυτον λεγοντα, και αλλου ακουοντα εμοιγε ασι ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΗΔΙΣΤΟΝ*. (Plato in *Phædone*.) and Tully will excuse me (in *orat. pro Archia poeta*.) si ipsi hæc neque attingere, neque sensu nostro gustare possemus, tamen ex mirari deberemus, etiam cum in aliis videremus.

(1) *Guard against objections.* There is as much reason for giving this advice to preachers as there is for saying to an architect going to build, Guard against winds and storms; you build in summer and retire; but your building

one without much reflection. (1)

Remark

ing must stand abroad all winter. It would be folly to suppose, that any religious truth, how demonstrable soever, could stand in this world free from objections. All truths touch somebody's interest, and touch the secular interest of half mankind, and you *touch their bone and their flesh*, and, were you a God, they would *curse you to your face*. Perhaps no subject is of greater importance to truth in the christian church than that of BENEFICES, and perhaps no protestant has written a better book on *beneficiary matters*, than that published by Fra Paoli Sarpi, who lived and died in the communion of the church of Rome, the most monied and the most corrupt of all. All communities allow the truths contained in it in theory; indeed who can deny them? but in practice - - - Ay, in practice, father Paul! we have a great many - - - very - - - weighty - - - objections - - - which require a - - - most - - - mature - - - deliberation. *Lay hands suddenly on no man* - - - You say, "the apostles never deputed a man to any ecclesiastical charge, who was not first *electd by the whole church collected together*."—You affirm, "the apostles *gave themselves to prayer, and to the*

*ministry of the word*, and left secular affairs to secular men; but now the chief prelates of the church, quite other sort of men, attend the government of *temporal* things, and leave the office of *preaching* and teaching the word of God, and the doctrine of the gospel to *friars and cheap inferior priests*." - - - Upon my conscience, father Paul! I cannot *see* the evidence, or the utility of your reasoning. - - Hear me, my friend! - - Yours is an interleaved edition of Fra Paoli on *beneficiary matters*, and, as you are a patron of the *arts* as well as a christian clergyman, your connoisseur left eye beguiles your clerical right eye, and fixes both on the beautiful copper-plate on the opposite page. That copper-plate is worth three thousand guineas annually at the bank of England. Ah! father Paul! *beneficiary matters* are divisible into *two* parts—there are *beneficial bank bills* as well as *beneficiary demonstrations*! Seriously, I mean to remind young ministers—that, in guarding their doctrines against objections, they should study *men* as well as books, and consider what it will cost some people to allow their demonstrations.

A preacher may excite objections against his doctrine by an injudicious way of  
pre-

Remark, however, objections must be natural, and popular, not far-fetched, nor too philosophical;

*proposing* it. Cassander, Grotius, Bishop Forbes, and many others have proposed a reunion of the reformed churches with the church of Rome: but the very manner, in which they proposed it, has created objections against a reunion stronger and more numerous than any, that lie against a separation.—“The difference, says one, lies more in *terms* than in things.—There is *no difference*, says another; Archbishop Sheldon and Blandford Bishop of Worcester both told the Dutchess of York that they prayed for the dead every day, although they did not own it. Barrow Bishop of S. Asaph, and Thorndike prebendary of Westminster caused requests for prayers for their souls to be put upon their gravestones. Forbes wrote for purgatory. Now say they, is it reasonable to separate from a church for teaching doctrines, which we ourselves suffer to be taught in our own?” To all which we reply. Such proposals of reunion to Rome as come from men, who so state the case as to prove their total ignorance of the real grounds of separation, are more objectionable than the separation itself. See *Essay for Catholic Communion* 1704.

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Objections against a doctrine may be created by an awkward manner of attempting to *prove* it. A vice-chancellor of a foreign university published a sabbath-day's meditation on the intermediate state of separate spirits: a consolatory discourse on the anniversary of his wife's death. Some of his first reflections are taken from—the singing of *swans* before death—from the opinions of Cicero—and Seneca—and Lactantius. Alas! *miserable comforters are they all!* The decisions of *Jesus Christ* should have stood first in place, as they stand first in authority on this article. *Joachimi Hagemeyeri De stat. anim.*

Objections, which are known to lie against a doctrine, may be strengthened by being *omitted*. Butler, who knew every body, and every thing, was pleased to call a certain set of people *Obsoletters*; and his last learned editor, Doctor Grey, who knew history and divinity, and every thing except equity to puritans, was pleased to inform the world, that he had found out after great labour, that these *obsoletters* were puritan preachers, and that his author so called them on account of their raising *objections* and then giving *so-*

F f

*lutions*



cal; in a word, they must be such as it is absolutely

*lutions* in their sermons; and also for their marking these parts of their sermons in the margins of their printed books by *ob—sol - - -* Most inconceivably important discovery! Why Doctor! You remind me of a most monstrous erudite scholar in Gil Blas: but for whom the world would never have known that children cried at Athens when they were beaten! The truth was, the prelates made *obs*, and the puritans were forced to make *sols* to sheath them; for the former had been so intent on establishing *themselves*, and on persecuting all non-conformists, that they had forgot to establish the gospel of Jesus Christ; when, therefore, the puritans obtained audience, they were obliged to remove a thousand objections against the simple truth, which their auditors, sunk in popular ignorance and superstitions, filthy offal left by popish prelates, and not cleansed away by high-flying episcopalians, had entertained. The famous Arthur Hildersham, a worthy predecessor of the learned Doctor Grey, in the living of Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, was one of these obfollers. Several of his lectures on the fourth of John are composed of *objections* and *answers*, and excellent sermons they are.

The *doctrine*, the *style*, and the *temper* of his works may be set against the productions of any prelate of his own age, and they would produce the same effect as a river produces in contrast with a standing pond. Hildersham had a noble soul, a soul too great to be governed by a few faddling rules drawn up by puling masters, at a fire-side, and never tried in real action. His law neither protected nor prohibited obfollers; his law was popular edification. Hear him. "Shew me not the meat: but shew me the man. He is the most able minister of the new testament, who winneth most souls, and reapeth most fruit unto God. That kind of preaching, whereby the people of God profit most in knowledge and sanctification, is the best kind of preaching. Let no man say, he is unlearned, who teacheth profitably. When God hath set his seal on his ministry (as on these he hath done. 1 Cor. ix. 2.) who art thou, that darest dispraise, or despise, or disgrace him! God's people should not allow best of him, who praiseth himself: but of him, whom the Lord praiseth by working with him in blessing his labours. 2 Cor. x. 18. Compare the hearers of these *learned* and *eloquent* teachers, whom thou

lutely necessary to observe and refute. (2)

They

so much admirest, with those of others, who preach plainly, and whom thou despisest for that cause, and judge whether is the best teacher. *I will know not the speech of them, that are puffed up: but the power. 1 Cor. iv. 19, 20.*" A man of such a heart cannot do much amiss. Give him a bible and a little common sense, and he will do greater good than a thousand doctorial editors of Hudibrastick books, a sort of common sewers, sinks of all the filth of the town, scraped up and swept in by scavengers in black! *Arth. Hildersham. Lect. on John, Lect. lxviii.*

(2) *State those objections only, which it is necessary to refute.* Some divines of modest and moderate principles have thought proper to state objections without any design of refuting them; and, it should seem, they have acted wisely in doing so. For 1. It is certain, there are many literary enquiries relative to the bible, and several doctrines contained in it, which are, and ever will be indissoluble mysteries. 2. These will always be liable to objections from all the enemies, and from many of the friends of revelation. Enemies will naturally complain; and some friends have

no ideas of mysteries in religion. 3. In this state of affairs, two sorts of believers will go to disputing. The one will urge objections, the other will endeavour to remove them; and in their great zeal will overshoot the mark, by attempting to elucidate what is naturally beyond elucidation; or by giving solutions more intricate and objectionable than the objections themselves. Here then, 4. Modest moderate men step in, state the difficulties on both sides, urge home the impossibility of obtaining demonstration, prove that the difficulties in question ought not to form even a prejudice against revelation, and turning the whole into moral use exhort the disputants to cease jarring about what none of them can determine. These divines are generally known in this world by odious appellations, and quaint names of slander and abuse, by which their fiery weak brethren think proper to distinguish, and punish them: but by what name they will be known in the next world, *the prince of peace*, who blessed the *peacemakers*, alone can tell!

Saurin was one of this class. His sermon on predestination, which we have elsewhere quoted, may serve

They must be proposed in a clear and simple style without rhetorical exaggerations; yet not unadorned nor unaffecting. (3)

I think,

to explain our meaning in regard to *doctrine*: and his preface to his dissertations on the bible, tom. i. will shew our meaning in regard to *literary* matters. "An *ancient* book—written in a *dead* language—in which *no other author* has written—speaking of *actions—customs—places—and nations*—of which *no vestige* remains—is it strange that there should be passages in such a book beyond the erudition of interpreters!" *Saur. Diff. tom. i. pref.*

(3) *State objections without rhetorical exaggerations.* In all argumentation it is extremely important to distinguish between reason and passion. Reason states facts, and draws conclusions: passion colours them; and, if we be incautious, the colouring will mislead us. The same cool equity, that is requisite in a court of judicature, ought to be exercised in a christian pulpit. For example.

The bill of indictment preferred against John Bunyan ran thus. "John Bunyan - - - hath devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service: and is a common upholder of several un-

lawful meetings and conventicles, to the disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the king."

The two facts are these. Bunyan did not worship Almighty God in the parish meeting-house. Bunyan did worship Almighty God in a farm-house. Now these two facts are innocent in themselves, inoffensive to society, and altogether unconnected with plots of subverting civil government, consequently, the citizen, who did them, ought not to have been criminated for these actions. But see what rhetorick can do! Call the parish meeting-house *the church*—name the ceremonies performed there *service*—assert the book that contains them to be *divine*—make the whole of religion to consist in *hearing* a priest *read* it—affirm that a *devil*, or a *devilkin* comes from hell to persuade Bunyan not to hear it—say that Bunyan's absence is of so much consequence as to be *pernicious*, or destructive to the divine book—Call the farmer's parlour, held in fee-simple, a *conventicle* or meeting-place—say, if sixteen harvest-men and their wives meet there on the twen-



I think, it is never adviseable to state objections, and defer the answers to them till another oppor-

twentieth of August and get drunk at harvest-home, the parlour is a *lawful* conventicle; and that if they meet there on the twenty-first of August to repent of drunkenness, and get Bunyan to pray to God there to accept their repentance, and to tell them out of the bible whether God will accept it, that then it is an *unlawful* conventicle—say, that the prayers and tears of these seventeen poor wretches *disturb* and *distract* all the good subjects of the kingdom, who may happen to be at the very time extremely merry at operas, play-houses, taverns, ale-houses, and other places, and know nothing about it—bedizen all this with the name of *our sovereign lord the king*—and lo! this rhetorical objection shall send Bunyan to jail for twelve years and six months!

In a manner equally fraudulent divines bring objections into the pulpit, and delude unwary souls with *great swelling words* of insignificance. Bishop Hoadley affirmed, that “the laws of Christ’s kingdom, *as he left them*, have nothing of this world in their view.” Doctor Trapp thought proper to object against this proposition, because “it would in-

troduce *anarchy* and *confusion* into THE CHURCH, and establish *heresy*, *libertinism*, *infidelity*, and *atheism*, upon the ruins of *christianity*.” that is to say, Christ left a system of *atheism*, and civil powers turned it into a system of *religion*. *Serm. on Christ’s kingdom. May 19, 1717.*

Here are two other facts. The British parliament suppressed episcopacy in less than one hundred years after they had established it. The liturgy was laid aside, and the directory supplied its place, by order of *the powers that were*. And had not the power, that created liturgy and episcopacy, as much right to annihilate as to create them? If religion be a state-tool, may not the state use whatever tools they think best serve their purpose? No such thing. Hear the church’s objection. “Episcopacy, that venerable, ancient, apostolical order fell a sacrifice to misguided zeal, and blind popular fury. Then began concerted ignorance to triumph wide and far over learning and sound knowledge, novelty over antiquity, confusion over order, schism, heresy and blasphemy over unity, orthodoxy, and sincere piety. This was refining upon the church of England!

opportunity; answer them directly, forcibly and fully. (4)

Here,

land! these our reformers!"  
 - - *Nay but*, Rev. Mr. Archdeacon, *who art thou, that repliest against THY God! Shall the thing formed say to him, that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus!* Hath not the civil magistrate power over the established clergy, of the same lump to make episcopalians in the sixteenth century and presbyterians in the seventeenth? The *fact*, and the *rhétorick* of it must be distinguished. *Dr. Waterland's serm. at S. Paul's, May 29, 1723.*

There are two sorts of people, who quit the episcopal community; and both ought to study this article. The first consists of those, whose objections lie against the *constitution* itself, and they ought not to yield up the plain, literal, solid reasons of their dissent to any declamations, that do not touch the point in debate, however florid they may be. The other class quit the church on account of the *men*, who administer the constitution; either, they say, their doctrines are unsound, or their lives immoral. These deal very largely in rhetorical objections against the clergy, and paint in glaring colours the preaching and the prac-

tices of the men. The first is the peaceable way of dissenting. It reprobates the constitution and leaves the men to the mercy of God. Civil liberty empowers them to do the first: christianity binds them to observe the last.

(4) *Refute objections fully.* Quintilian says, it is as much harder to defend than to accuse, as to heal a wound is harder than to make one. "Non sine causa tamen difficilior semper est creditum (quo Cicero sæpe testatur) defendere quam accusare - - proponitur enim uno modo, varie dissolvitur - - hinc mille flexus et artes desiderantur - - accusationibus etiam mediocres in dicendo sufficerunt: bonus defensor nemo, nisi qui eloquentissimus fuit. Nam ut quod sentio semel finiam, tanto est accusare quam defendere quanto facere quam sanare vulnera facilius." *Inst. v. 13 de Refutatione.*

Christianity was formed perfect by Jesus Christ as the human body was made by the creator, and in its original simplicity it required nothing of literary skill to answer objections, for its enemies could say nothing against it worth hearing: but after it fell into the butcherly

Here, it may be asked, whether in stating objections to be answered it be proper to propose them all together at once, and then come to the answers, or whether they should be proposed and answered one by one? I suppose discretional good sense must serve for both guide and law upon this subject. If three or four objections regard only *one* part of the text, if each may be proposed and answered in a few words, it would not be amiss to propose these objections all together, distinguishing them however by first—second—third—this may be done agreeably: but if these objections regard *different* parts of the text, or different matters, if they require to be proposed at full length, and if it would also take some time to answer them, it would be an impertinence to propose them all together. In such a case they must be proposed and answered apart (5)

## XXIII.

ly hands of bad men, who first chopped it in pieces and destroyed its form, and then made it up again another form as seemed good to the makers, it became very objectionable, and learning and skill became requisite qualifications of its defenders. The only way, then, of solidly defending christianity is the art of disentangling the original, and of placing it in its primitive shape.

(5) *Some objections must be stated separately, and others all together.* That inestimable set of sermons against popery, which was preached by our ministers at Salters' hall in 1735, affords a beautiful ex-

emplification of our author's rule. The set contains our objections against popery. Each of these was proposed *apart*. Mr. Barker opened the lecture with a general charge of corruption—Doctor Chandler followed, and objected against the *papal notes* of the church—Mr. Neal came next and destroyed popish *supremacy*—Mr. Smyth examined *infallibility*—Doctor Wright considered *tradition*—Doctor Harris *transubstantiation*, and so on. Each article is an objection against popery, and it was fair and proper to examine each apart: but it was not necessary in examining each article



## XXIII.

CONSIDER CHARACTERS OF—MAJESTY—MEAN-  
NESS—INFIRMITY—NECESSITY—UTILITY—  
EVIDENCE, &c. (6)

MAJESTY, AND MAGNANIMITY.

Take an example of this from John xiv. i. *Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, believe also*

cle to separate the several objections, that there are against each, and to refute them apart. They are, therefore, in some of the sermons stated *all together*. Thus Doctor Harris. "The Trent catechism says—That the sacrament is the true body of Christ, which was born of the virgin, and is now in heaven, together with his soul and divinity—That it is entire in every part of the bread, and every drop of the wine—that no part of the substance of bread and wine remains—that the accidents of bread and wine, which do remain, are in no subject, but exist by themselves in a wonderful manner, and which is not too curiously to be inquired into - - - This is *the point* I am to debate at this time." It was smartly said by Doctor Hughes in the next sermon, which was against the popish veneration of saints; "there is one saint, who, I fear, does not come in for his share of de-

votions - - - it is one Saint Mathurin, who, it seems, has an admirable nostrum for the cure of *folly*."

(6) *Consider characters*. As there are certain personal qualities peculiar to each individual, and to describe these is to *characterize* the man, so there are certain peculiarities, which belong to expression, and these peculiarities, whatever they are, are the characters, or distinguishing marks of each expression. There are as many of these as there are intelligent emotions, which express themselves in language; for proper language is all expression of emotion. Even *tones*, without articulation, are characteristic, that is to say, they express fear, joy, anger, and so on; and there are cases in which *silence* is characteristic. Our author's rule, then, is founded in the nature of things.

There is a kind of sympathy between intelligence and expression. Mean thoughts cannot

*also in me.* These words are characterized by a *majesty*, which exalts Jesus Christ above all ordinary pastors, and above all the prophets; for who beside the son of God could say, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me?* These words equal Jesus Christ to the eternal father, and make him the object of our faith and confidence as well as the father; for they imply that faithful souls may repose an entire confidence in his power, protection and government, and that the shadow of his wings will dissipate the sorrows of their minds, and leave no more room for fear. (7)

You

cannot be dignified by language, and much language only gives the whole the air of shrivelled fruits. On the contrary, magnanimity of thought shines through language just as some lovely female features sparkle through a thin gauze veil. The sympathy lies not in the quantity: but in the *sort* of style. Longinus treats of this in his ninth section, and calls sublime language μεγαλοφροσυνης απιχημα, *eccho magnitudinis animi*. The holy scriptures inculcate the same idea: *a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words, a fool's speech, or style is characterized by an exuberance of terms*—*hearken to the voice of my words*: Job xxxiv. 16.—*The rulers knew not the voices of the prophets*: Acts xiii. 27.—*Paul's epistles are weighty and powerful*: 2 Cor. x. 10.—*The sheep know the shepherd's voice*: John x. 4.

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(7) *Character of majesty.* It was prophesied of the Messiah, *he shall feed in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God*; that is to say, he shall *teach* a sublime doctrine, and he shall *rule* like God with an irresistible authority. Micah v. 4. Jesus of Nazareth exactly answers this description. The TRUTH of his doctrine is the sublimity of it, and the demonstration, that attends it, carries along with it the soft impelling sway of irresistible conviction, forming principles of self-satisfaction (if I may so speak) within the soul of each disciple. There are various degrees of the sublimity of truth. The whole truth of a gnat or an acorn would form a noble body of science: what must the truth of God be! Him no man had ever seen; he inhabited light that none could approach; yet all human felicity lay in the know-

G g

You see also a character of *tenderness* and infinite love towards his disciples, which appears in the assurance, with which he inspires them, and in the promise, which he tacitly makes them, of always powerfully supporting, and never forsaking them. The same characters, or others like them, may be observed in all this discourse of our Saviour, which goes on to the end of the sixteenth chapter. As in these words, *I am the way, the truth, and the life*—in these, *He that hath seen me, Philip, hath seen the father*—in these, *Whatsoever ye ask in my name I will do it*—and again in these,  
*I will*

knowledge of him. *The only begotten of the Father* was full of true ideas of him, and, being also full of grace, he declared him to us; declared the most sublime subject in the most majestick manner. It was *the voice of the Lord, powerful and full of majesty*. Psal. xxix. 4.

The text above is, as our author observes, no incompetent proof of our Lord's divinity. *Ye believe in God* - - - *believe also in me*. What an association of ideas! Had ever prophet presumed to utter such language as this? This is one of the many texts, that disgrace the character of Christ in the same proportion as his divinity is denied. He associated himself as a ground of confidence with the Father, and proposes both together to the faith of his disciples. A dangerous association if he were a mere man!

This text affords a proof of that obscurity, which the poverty of language necessarily sheds on sentiment. The copious greek language, which makes a thousand words out of one verb, is after all obliged to express an *indicative* and an *imperative* sentiment by the same term; and there are cases, in which it will be hard to come at the precise idea of the speaker. The verb *πιστευετε* in this text is of this kind; and its ambiguity of mood has given rise to four readings of the text.—1. *Ye do believe in God: ye do also believe in me: be not troubled then*—2. *Believe in God: believe also in me: and give yourselves no farther trouble*—3. *Believe in God: ye do believe in me: thus you will be free from anxiety*—4. *Ye do believe in God: believe also in me: and make yourselves easy*.  
Our



*I will not leave you orphans* (8) *I will come to you.*  
In general, we see almost in every verse majesty,  
tender-

Our best criticks adopt the *second* reading, because it is not usual in scripture style to use the same verb in the same sentence in *both* moods—and because it agrees with the apparent *design* of the speaker, which was to strengthen the courage and comfort of the disciples by strengthening their faith. Vid. *Poli Synopsis. in loc.*

(3) *I will not leave you orphans. Oum aenow uwas oppawous. Non relinquam vos orbos, i. e. solos, et præsentia mea ac gratia destitutos. Vester ero patronus, et vos*

potenter protegam. This, as our author justly observes, is characterized with *tenderness*. Christ is a person of genuine affection; sensibility to human woe is his *real character*. To express this he describes his emotions by *imagery* of the tenderest kind. Is there in nature a more pitiable object than an exposed orphan? Is there a nobler idea than this of an *ever-living father*, an everlasting patron? I venture to alter and adapt four lines to the subject.

————— with head declin'd,  
Like a fair flow'r surcharg'd with dew, he wept.  
And words address'd seem'd into tears dissolv'd,  
Wetting the borders of his homely garb.

*Milton. Samf. Agon.*

A student of divinity cannot help observing four things on this subject. 1. *A singularity of character in Christ*. He had every thing human in the highest perfection. His joys were grave—his griefs were just—his gentleness and his goodness, his inflexibility and his humanity, all his excellencies were in perfect harmony with each other, and all moved on in the solemn state of all the other complete works of nature.—2. *The inhumanity of some of his pretended disciples*. Compare the sentiments and lan-

guage of pretended patrons of the church with those of our divine patron. Unfeeling authors of ecclesiastical woe! who taught you to bluster, and order, and curse in the church!—3. *The true character of an original disciple of Jesus*. Like his divine master his soul dissolves at human misery, and his beneficent hands relieve it. Conformity to modes and forms may make *persona*, a mask in grammar, and a *parson* in law: but, good God! how different is evangelical sensibility of soul

tenderness, love of holiness, confidence of victory, and other such characters, which it is important to remark. (9)

### MEANNESS AND INFIRMITY.

You will very often observe characters of meanness and infirmity in the words and actions of the dif-

from all this!—4. *The nature and use of affection in a preacher.* O how deep into the heart go those periods, which are sown in the unforced, uninvited tears of the preacher! S. Paul's last sermon to the Ephesians was delivered in the true spirit of his pattern. He delivered it *with many tears*; the people *swept sore—fell on his neck—kissed* the departing servant of God—and *sorrowed most of all for the words, which he spake, that they should see his face no more.* Acts xx. 18, 37, 38.

(9) *Observation of characters is important.* The great consequence of this will appear by one single consideration. All perfect productions have properties real and excellent. Some imperfect beings, not having these properties, endeavour to *act* them. When a vassal acts like a baron, we say he *lords* it, and when a bad man strives to act the character of a good one, without endeavouring to obtain qualities essential to a good man, we

justly consider him as an ecclesiastical stage-player, and call him a *hypocrite*, a moral dissembler with *holy leer*. Lewis the fourteenth is said to have possessed none of the qualities of a king: but to have acted the part of one as well as he could. This is what our James I. called *kingcraft*, of which, God knows, the poor soul had very little! There is in the church *priestcraft*—*prophetcraft*—*christiancraft*; that is to say, wicked men have found it worth their while to try to act the parts of men, who really possessed the qualities, that constitute these characters.

The august character of the Messiah has been attempted by impostors (See *Joseph. de bell. Jud. L. vi. E. 5. S. 2.*) Now as it is important to distinguish the true Christ from false Christs, so it must be of consequence thoroughly to inform christians of the real character of our inimitable Jesus. Moreover, as he is to be humbly imitated by his disciples, it

disciples of Jesus Christ. As when they asked him, *Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* Acts i. 6. (1) You see, even after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, they were full of that low and carnal idea, which they had entertained, of a temporal Messiah. (2)

You

is necessary they should be thoroughly acquainted with their model. See vol. i. p. 344.

(1) *Restore the kingdom, &c.* There are (says Calvin) as many errors as words in this question. They dream of an *earthly* kingdom - - they assign the *time* - - they shut out the gentiles, restraining the kingdom to *Israel* - - they would know what was *not* revealed, whereas true wisdom is to stop in learning where Christ our master pauses in teaching. Hence he properly infers the absurdity of aiming to be *wise above what is written*, and reproves such as love to deal in dark mysteries, either in things not revealed at all, or but darkly and obscurely mentioned. *Calv. in Act. i. 6.*

(2) *The idea of a temporal Messiah is mean and carnal.* This mean idea hath possessed the minds of professed disciples of Christ in all ages. The apostles soon struggled through such low secular notions: but a very large succession of their pretended followers have expired incurable

under this disease. They have few ideas of piety, and none of dignity detached from the worldly parade of rich endowments, palaces, cathedrals, founding titles and gaudy habits; as if all religion were nothing but a raree-show. The pagans reproached the primitive christians for not building spacious temples. Lactantius, Arnobius, Minutius Felix, and others justified the people of God by shewing—the *nature* of the deity—the *kind* of worship, that he required—the *inutility* and *danger* of pomp in religion; and so on. After Constantine arrived at the throne, riches were squandered with unparalleled profusion in building and adorning publick edifices of religion. Eusebius, who preached at the dedication of that at Tyre, was so infatuated as to affirm, that in the splendor of that temple was accomplished the prophecy of Haggai, who had said, *the glory of the latter house shall be greater than that of the former*, ii. 9. that is, according to this court chaplain, christians shall build nobler



You also see a *rash curiosity* in their desiring to know the times and seasons of those great events, which God thought fit to conceal.

Observe again, Peter's vision. A great sheet was let down from heaven, and filled with all sorts of animals; a voice said to him, *Rise Peter, kill and eat*; to which he answered, *Not so Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common and unclean.* You see in this answer an *over-scrupulous* conscience all embarrassed with legal ceremonies; and a very defective imperfect knowledge of gospel-liberty. (3)

There

nobler temples than Jews builded. Full of this puerile plan, they imitated the old temple. There was a *porch* for strangers, catechumens, and penitents. There was a choir, like the *holy place*, for believers; and emperors had stalls at the upper ends. There was also a sanctuary, or a *most* holy place for ecclesiasticks, and before them stood the communion table covered with finery, after the fashion of the old mercy-seat. Each part was separated from the other by balustrades, gilt and adorned. Such palaces would have been disgraced by the neat plain simplicity of common dress, and now that the church was a palace churchmen must dress like princes, and bring in the old Aaronical habits. Men of real abilities and true piety fled; for they knew their

Lord's kingdom was not of this world. How could the remnant fill up the time devoted to religion? A ritual must be prepared, a price paid for reading it; and, lest mens minds should hereafter revolt, the whole must be endowed with estates, and guarded by penalties. Thus rose popery according to the *prophecies that went before.* S. Jerom, S. Bernard, and many others have clearly shewn, that all pomp is injurious to real religion. We speak of pomp in religion only.

(3) What God hath cleansed that call not *thou* common. *Tu, est antithesis q. d. cum Deus leges de cibis immundis abrogaverit, tu homuncio inani scrupulo a quibusdam tanquam immundis ne abstineas.*

There is almost an infinite number of texts in the new testament, where such infirmities appear, and you must not fail to remark them in order to prove,—1. That grace is compatible with much human weakness.—2. That heavenly light arises by degrees upon the mind, and that it is with the new man as with the natural man, who is born an infant, lisps in his childhood, and arrives at perfection insensibly and by little and little.—3. That the strongest and farthest advanced Christians ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, since God himself does not *break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax*. This he was pleased to exemplify in the most ample manner in the person of Jesus Christ, when he was upon earth. (4)

## NECES-

(4) *Characters of meanness and infirmity*. It should seem, there are two dangerous extremes incident to observations of this kind. Some divines, on the one hand, deny these characters in the penmen of scripture, lest by allowing them they should weaken the evidences of their inspiration. Thanks be to God, the biblical writers have better claims to inspiration than any that can arise from grammar or rhetorick of style, or even at places from elevation of sentiment, or absolute perfection of moral rectitude. They never pretended to place the evidences of their mission on such precarious grounds. They lose nothing of their dignity by our allowing Mr.

Claude's rule. The other extreme lies in calling all that meanness and infirmity, which does not square with our arbitrary laws of dignity and magnanimity. Writers of this class are very free in making trammels for apostles to amble in: but the attempt is rash, and generally disgraceful to the undertaker. Glorious logick! My tutor would have said so and so. Ergo, S. Paul should have said so! In regard to *style*, translations often mislead preachers, and give an air of meanness to the style, and a low turn of thought to the subject. God commanded Ezekiel during the captivity, while Israel and Judah were two kingdoms, to signify to the captives that the two king-

## NECESSITY.

In regard to *necessity*, you may very often remark this in explaining the doctrines of religion : as when you speak of the mission of Jesus Christ into the world—of his familiar conversation with men—of his death—resurrection—and ascension to heaven, &c. for you may not only consider the *truth*, but also the *necessity* of each ; and by this mean open a most beautiful field of theological argument and elucidation. (5)

The

kingdoms should hereafter be united, and incorporated into one civil state. In order to express this by a visible sign, as usual, the Lord ordered him to take *two wooden tablets*, to write upon one *Judab*, and upon the other *Israel*, and to frame them so that they might be jointed together, and become one in his hand. Our translators rendered the phrase *two sticks*, Ezek. xxxvii. 16. A certain preacher (I fear it was Mat. Mead) took this text, and, as he thought—that “ they were *faggot sticks*—that dry sticks would snap—that faggots must be made up either while the sap was in the wood, or after it had been soaked well in water—and that humiliation would soak and soften his auditors”—he ventured to conclude with “ First, An use of humbling, that the people of God should be *two sticks* : and Secondly,

An use of rejoicing that God had made the *two sticks one*.” I know not who published this sermon, for the title page is gone : but the fault is too common.

(5) *Necessity*. This is one of the many abstract terms, which stand for things, that are not as though they were. Mr. Claude seems to take it in general for what is fit and proper in the nature of things, and what, therefore, is an essential part, of the whole. S. Paul illustrates the gospel by this topick in his epistle to the Hebrews—There is made *of necessity* a change of the law—it is *of necessity* this man have somewhat to offer—there must *of necessity* be the death of the testator. Heb. vii. 12. viii. 3. ix. 16.

In this plain popular sense, it should seem, the word *necessity* is friendly to religion : but in its metaphysical meaning it is a source of unprofitable



The same may be affirmed of sending the comforter, that is, the holy ghost into the world; in explaining these words, *I will pray the father and he shall give you another comforter*, John xiv. 16. You may very properly consider the necessity of this *comforter*; either because without his light and help we can never release ourselves from the bondage of sin and satan—or because without his assistance all that Jesus Christ has done in the œconomy of salvation would be entirely useless to us. You may also observe the necessity of his *eternal abode* with us—because it is not enough to be once converted by his efficacious power, we need his continual presence and efficacy to carry on and finish the work of sanctification; otherwise we should quickly relapse into our first condition. (6)

#### UTILITY.

fitable disputation, curious as chasms in rocks, and like them dangerous to common travellers. See *Butler's Analogy*, ch. v. *Locke's Essay*, ii. 21. *Limborch—Law—Leibnitz—Clarke—Hobbes—Spinoza*, &c. &c.

(6) *Necessity of the holy spirit*. Unus ergo et idem spiritus, qui in prophetis et Apostolis, ibi parce datus, hic large commodatus; nec tamen ante resurrectionem domini exhibitus, sed per resurrectionem Christi contributus. Rogabo enim, aiebat, patrem et alium advocatum dabit vobis, *ut vobiscum sit in æternum*. Et quoniam dominus in cœlos esset abiturus paracletum discipulis *necessario* dabat, ne illos quodammodo pupillos quod minime

decebat relinqueret, et sine avvocato et quodam tutore defereret. Hic est enim qui ipsorum animos mentesque firmavit, qui evangelica sacramenta distinxit, qui in ipsis illuminator rerum divinarum fuit, quo confirmati pro nomine domini nec carceres nec vincula timuerunt, quinimo ipsas seculi potestates, et tormenta calcaverunt, armati jam scilicet per ipsum atque firmati, habentes in se dona, quæ hic idem spiritus ecclesiæ Christi sponsæ quasi quædam ornamenta distribuit et dirigit. Hic est enim, qui prophetas in ecclesiâ constituit, magistros erudit, linguas dirigit, virtutes et sanitates facit, opera mirabilia gerit, distributiones spirituum porrigit,

## UTILITY.

Where a thing does not appear absolutely necessary, you may remark its *utility*: as—in some particular miracles of Jesus Christ—in some peculiar afflictions of the faithful—in the manner in which S. Paul was converted—and in an infinite number of subjects which present themselves to a preacher to be discussed. (7)

## EVIDENCE.

gubernationes contribuit, consilia suggerit, quæque alia sunt charismatum dona componit et digerit, et ideo ecclesiam domini undique et in omnibus perfectam et consummatam facit. Erudiuntur enim in illo, et per ipsum corpora nostra ad immortalitatem proficere, dum ad decreta ipsius discunt se moderanter temperare. Hic est enim, qui contra carnem desiderat, quia caro contra ipsum repugnat. Hic est, qui inexpleriles cupiditates coercet, immoderatas libidines frangit, illicitos ardores extinguit, flagrantem impetum vincit, ebrietates rejicit, avaritias repellit, luxuriosas commensationes fugit, caritates necit, affectiones confringit, &c. Hic in apostolis Christo testimonium reddit, in martyribus constantem fidem religionis ostendit, in virginibus admirabilem continentiam signatæ charitatis includit, in cæteris incorrupta et incontaminata doctrinæ dominicæ jura custodit, hæreticos destruit, per-

versos corrigit, infideles arguit, simulatores ostendit, improbos quoque corrigit; ecclesiam incorruptam et inviolatam perpetuæ virginitatis et veritatis sanctitate custodit." *Novat. de Trin. c. 29.*

(7) *Observe utility.* According to our author, it was absolutely necessary for the Messiah to prove his mission by miracles: but it was not absolutely necessary for him to work them in this village rather than in that. It is absolutely necessary for believers to be afflicted: but it is not necessary for each believer to suffer the same kind and the same degree of affliction. The conversion of Saul was necessary: but the manner of it was not so. Thus by distinguishing two sorts of actions he conciliates necessity and free agency. Thus we affirm in general—private prayer is necessary: the time and place of offering it arbitrary—charity to the poor is necessary: the way of administering it arbitrary: and so on. All this is plain, popular,

## EVIDENCE.

Evidence must be particularly pressed in articles, which are disputed, or which are likely to be controverted. (8) For example, Were you to treat  
of

lar, and edifying; and here on these subjects the pulpit should pause. Metaphysical refinements may proceed in private, or in the schools, a great deal farther; and, if the investigator lose himself very little damage will be done: but to puzzle and perplex plain christians with the exquisite subtilties of the schools is a most intolerable abuse of divinity. Did ever man exist, who understood the following propositions? If unintelligible, where is their utility? - - - Alas! I forgot myself. They are useful. "The *infection* of nature deserveth God's damnation—works before grace do not deserve grace of *congruity*—God doth *work* invisibly in us by infant-baptism, and by it doth quicken, strengthen, and confirm our *faith* in him. *Episcopal articles*, ix, xiii, xxv.

*Utility.* There is no rule of elucidation more important than this. Nothing can be more absurd than to labour to establish a point in a popular discourse, which the people are incapable of applying to some good useful moral purpose at home. Some

of our ministers love to excite the diligence of their people by representing the christian sabbath as a market-day, and the truths of the gospel as wares exposed to sale; and the idea is not wholly unscriptural, see Isai. lv. 1, 2, &c. But is it worth while, on such days, to neglect real business, in order to tickle the fancies of idlers by rope-dancing—vending trinkets—or exhibiting a show-box! Compared with such harlequins, yon busy honest fellow, who sells rush-rope to the thatcher, and sickles and rakes to the labouring rusticks, is a pillar of a community, a most respectable member of society.

(8) *Evidence.* Our author supposes, evidence arises to some truths from surrounding *circumstances*—as from place—manner of expression—&c. &c. and he subjoins an example, to which, as contraries illustrate each other, we will add the following.

A certain supralapsarian divine preached from 1 Chro. iv. 22. and *these are ancient things*, and endeavoured to establish in his sermon the



of the second commandment in opposition to the custom and practice of worshipping images in the church of Rome, you should press the *evidence* of the words. As, 1. It has pleased God to place this command not in some obscure part of revelation: but in the *moral law*, in that law, every word of which he caused to proceed from the midst of the flames.

## 2. He

supralapsarian system of the order of God's decrees in opposition to sublapsarianism—the *love* of God was an ancient thing—the setting up of Christ as the *covenant-head* of his people was an ancient thing—and so on. Certainly the good man's text formed a strong prejudice against his doctrine; for it is *placed* not in a discourse concerning redemption: but in a genealogy interlined with here and there a historical anecdote. Some of these families were craftsmen, and inhabited such a part of the country—others wrought in pottery and dwelt in such a part—such a family had a linnen manufactory—and such a house were lords of the soil—one was allied to the royal family of Egypt—another had two wives—and these are ancient *traditions*—or these are extracted from ancient *records*. Is not the *place* of this line proof of its meaning? We refer to verses 14—23—21—22. 32—18—5.

*Evidence must be urged in controverted points.* It is fashionable with many divines to boast of their aversion to controversy, and to make a merit of teaching only such doctrines as are not disputable. What a poor piece of business is this! Is there any one doctrine of natural or revealed religion, which is not controverted? Does not every deist deny our bible, and every atheist the being of our God? A man, therefore, who determines to teach only undisputed articles, determines *ipso facto* to teach nothing at all.

The inspired writings do not countenance any such notions. The whole Jewish religion is styled *Jehovah's controversy*, Hos. iv. 1. Micah vi. 2. Jer. xxv. 31. The Jewish polity considered all civil and ecclesiastical matters as controvertible, and provided very properly for the decision of all cases. 2 Chron. xix. 8, &c. The whole book of Job is a controversy. The ministry of  
our

2. He uses not only the term *image*, but *likeness*, and specifies even the likenesses of *all* the things in the world, of those which are *in heaven above*, of those which are *in the earth beneath*, and of those which are *under the earth*.

3. In order to prevent all the frivolous objections of the human mind, he goes yet farther, not only forbidding the *worshipping* of them, but also the making *use* of them in any manner of way; and, which is more, he even forbids the *making* of them. *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them. Thou shalt not serve them. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, &c.*

#### 4. Add

our Saviour was a perpetual controversy. S. Paul's epistles are, most of them, controversial. The apostles came at truth by *much disputing* among themselves, Acts xv. 7. and they convinced Jews and Gentiles by disputing with both. Acts xvii. 17. xix. 8.

Strictly speaking, a dispute is an *oral* controversy, and a controversy is a *written* dispute. Now, to controvert or dispute a point, either by word or writing, is only to agitate a question in order to obtain clear adequate ideas of it. Can it be imagined, religion does not admit of this? Let us sum up the matter in two undeniable remarks. 1. It is a fact, every article of religion is denied by some, and cannot be believed without debate and examination by any.

2. It is a certain fact, religion empowers us to investigate, debate, dispute, and controvert each article in order to ascertain the evidence of it.

Whence, then, the outcry against controversy? It proceeds in different men from very different causes. 1. Some artfully decry controversy in order to destroy free inquiry, which would endanger their established errors. Gloom in the doctrine and silence in the disciple, obscurity in the creed and obedience in the subscriber assort well together. *'Tis dumb amaze—and list'ning terror all!*

2. Others hate disputes, because, all faintish as they are, all devoted to the will of God, all devoured with zeal for his glory, and the good of precious souls, they hate

4. Add to all this, that the Lord subjoined the highest *interests* to enforce it. He interested herein his majesty, his covenant, and his infinite power; for (says he) *I am Jehovah thy God*. He goes farther, and interests his jealousy, that is, that inexorable justice, which avenges affronts offered to his love. Yea, in order to touch us still more sensibly, he even goes so far as to interest our children, threatening us with that terrible wrath, which does not end with the parents, but passes down to their posterity. What could the Lord say more plainly and evidently to shew that he would suffer no image in his religious worship? After all this, is it not the most criminal presumption to undertake to distinguish in order to elude the force of this commandment?

You

hate (such is their insufferable arrogance!) they hate to be contradicted. To doubt their infallibility, to dispute their oracular declarations, to think differently, and to dare to inform others of your reasons for doing so, what is this but the black mark of reprobation!

3. Others, again, declaim against disputing their doctrines to save themselves the disgrace of exposing their ignorance, or the labour of examining, understanding, and defending their own theses. Laziness, pride, and intolerance distinguish these three sorts of placid divines.

4. There are others, who distinguish between *controversy* and the *temper*, in which it is usually conducted; and,

as they observe, that few men have those generous, liberal, benign dispositions, which are essential qualities of a good controversial christian, they think it more conducive to the general good to decry a *disputatious spirit*, by which they intend not to suppress *inquiry*, debate, dispute, controversy: but the wicked *tempers*, which generally animate them.

There are in some of our churches professed meetings of christians for the purpose of debating a point of theology, or a portion of scripture, or a case of conscience, and these, properly managed with coolness, candour, gentle and kind dispositions, have often been productive of mutual edification. See Dr. Owen's



You may, if you choose, over and above all this, add Moses's explication of this command in the fourth of Deuteronomy. (9)

You may also use the same character of *evidence* when you explain several passages, which adversaries abuse—as these words, *this is my body which is broken for you*—and these in the sixth of John, *eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood*—  
and

*Owen's pract. cases of conscience resolved at church-meetings.*

No theological subject requires more accurate investigation than this article of *evidence*. Evidence is that which demonstrates. Now there are various *kinds* and *degrees* of evidence, and it would very much contribute to clear a point in debate, were disputants first of all to agree on certain data, or *what* should be allowed evidence in the case in question. In law this is a matter of great consequence, and, when divines proceed in the methods used in our courts of law, they gain infinite advantages over their opponents. They do, as it were, swear the witnesses before they admit them as evidence. Dr. Stennett has given the death wound to Mr. Addington's arguments for infant-baptism by this method.

(9) *Explain the second commandment.* Abbé Pluché speaking of idolatry says, “this history of the extravagancies of our forefathers does indeed present the reader

with a deplorable prospect: but it may methinks engage our curiosity, not only by the novelty of the insights it gives us into the origin of this senseless worship, but - - it is of greater concern to piety, by setting in a good light the infinite superiority of the instructions of *christianity* above those of philosophy. We shall see the latter wandering from age to age, heaping new errors incessantly upon the first, and more and more losing sight of truth or criminally detaining it captive; then authorizing men to adore all and every one of the parts of the universe, and at last inclining them to adore nothing at all. Christianity is the only doctrine, that ever attacked idolatry with efficacy, rendered augurs contemptible, sunk the credit of astrology, made the perplexing superstitions that tyrannized over the universe fall to the ground, and even rectified the reason of those who did not believe the gospel.” *Hist. of the Heavens*, v. i. c. 2.

and those passages also in S. James, which speak of justification by works—for in treating these passages in opposition to the false senses, which the church of Rome gives of them, you must assemble many circumstances, and place each in its proper light, so that all together they may diffuse a great brightness upon the text, and clearly shew its true sense. (1)

## XXIV.

(1) *Character of evidence.* Thus Massillon on John viii. 46. *If I say the truth why do ye not believe me?* - - - the world opposes two pretexts against the evidence of the most terrible truths of God's word. 1. In order to calm themselves, amidst a thousand abuses authorized in the world, they tell us, they think their state very safe, their conscience does not reproach them, and if they were persuaded there was any danger, they would change their condition directly. 2. They say, the scripture is not so clear and precise upon certain points as we pretend, and what appears so clear to us does not appear so to every body. The first pretext is the good faith and tranquillity of their conscience—the second the obscurity and uncertainty of scripture rules. To these I oppose a double character of evidence, which belongs to the law, which will confound these two pretexts, and condemn all the vain excuses of sinners in the day of the

Lord's vengeance. For, 1. It is evident in the conscience of the sinner. 2. It is evident in the simplicity of its rules. The evidence of God's law in your consciences will judge your pretended good faith and security: and the simplicity of its rules will judge your affected doubts, and pretended uncertainties. *Mass. ser. Careme 4. S. premiere.*

To this also must be referred that admirable sermon of the same preacher on 1 Cor. ii. 12. *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God.* A skeleton of his exordium will give a faint idea of his sermon. He says from Austin, "that the spirit of the world and the spirit of God form here in this world two cities, Babylon and Jerusalem, which have each their laws, maxims, citizens, &c.—that these two spirits divide the whole world, involving empires and families, courts and cloisters—that it is impossible to be a member of both, and more still to belong to neither—that these dif-

## XXIV.

## REMARK DEGREES. (2)

For example, Gal. i. 8 *If we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that, which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* After you have remarked the extreme force and significancy of the words, observe that the apostle denounced an anathema *twice*, even denouncing it against *himself*, should he ever be guilty of what he condemns, denouncing it even against an *angel* from heaven in the same case.

You

different men will agree in the same external form of worship—that it is easy to deceive ourselves, especially if we practise the most sacred externals of religion—that in short the only way is to strip ourselves of outward distinctions, inquire what spirit rules in our hearts, and judge of this by the word of God—in order to this we must remark the different *characters* attributed in scripture to each of these spirits—as first christianity is characterized by separation, reflection, prayer, self-denial, repentance, &c.—the spirit of the world is opposite to all this, a sinning, self-gratifying, prayerless spirit, &c. *Mass. serm. Myster. Pentecote.*

(2) *Remark degrees.* Degree is the *comparative* condition of any thing, and the study of this topick is neces-

sary to the obtaining of *accuracy* in theology. An accurate sermon is a discourse made up of an exact *quantity* of each component part. There is a certain degree, or quantum of *truth*—there is an exact point of light, or degree of *evidence*, in which this truth is placed—there is a nice quantum sufficit of *imagery*, colouring and enlivening the evidence—there are nice degrees of *temper* adjusted to all parts; the reasoning is vigorous, the narration cool, the suasion pathetic, soft and warm, and so on—there is a sort of *style* adapted to the subject—and there is a degree of vehemence or indifference in the very words or letters, that express the whole, suited to the importance or the comparative insignificance of each part. The composition of



You must observe, the apostle does not always use the same vehemence when he speaks against error. (3) In the fourteenth of the epistle to the Romans he contents himself with calling those *weak in the faith*, who would eat only herbs, and exhorts the other believers to bear with them. In the third chapter of the first to the Corinthians he protests to those, who build with wood, hay, and stubble upon Christ the foundation, that their  
*work*

such a sermon is a work of great labour, and yet it must not appear to be laboured at all. The art of composing such a discourse is merely human, and, it should seem, is banished by S. Paul from the christian pulpit, and confined to schools and places of human science. 1 Cor. ii. Natural eloquence cannot be denied an entrance into the pulpit: but artificial eloquence is expressly forbidden. There is a great deal of reason for this distinction; for, were scholastick eloquence, or the purer eloquence of simple accuracy essential to a good sermon, either the people would have very few sermons, or the preacher would have such intolerable difficulties in composing his discourses, that all the other parts of his office would lie neglected; and, after all, very little benefit would be derived from his labours. What numbers in the spring enjoy the fragrance of universal nature, who are incapable of culling the sweets,

and combining the sprigs, that form the delicate nosegay of a fine lady!

Some attention to degrees, however, is essential to a minister in studying scripture—in investigating and reasoning on subjects—in determining the direction of promises and threatnings—in relieving troubled consciences—and so on. There are degrees of punishment pointed against degrees of sin—degrees of glory adapted to degrees of virtue—degrees of assurance proportioned to degrees of faith, &c. &c.

(3) *S. Paul does not speak against all errors with equal vehemence.* Our author supposes S. Paul an example to christian ministers, and considers his conduct towards erroneous persons as a directory of standing authority: but this general notion ought to be particularly explained, lest it should seem to authorize the dangerous maxim of suppressing error by corporal punishments.

*work* should be burnt, but that *they* should be *saved*, though it should be *by fire*. In the seven-  
teenth

1. It is allowed, the apostles inflicted corporal punishments, as in the cases of Elymas, Ananias and Sapphira: but these were *extraordinary* cases, and were wrought by miraculous power.

2. There were *no* exertions of this power in cases of error of judgment: nor any in cases of those wrong practices, which did not destroy the essence of christian worship: but on the contrary a kind and gentle mutual toleration prevailed. See Rom. xiv.—1 Cor. xi.—1 Cor. x. 29 - - 33.

3. It is certain, *this* passage, Gal. i. 9. cannot authorize the suppressing of error by corporal punishments. For, 1. Neither had S. Paul, nor the Galatian church any magistratical authority. Nor, 2. Could the supposed case of anathematizing an angel include the idea of corporal punishment. *If we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed: that is to say, consider us as persons excommunicated.*

Excommunication in the primitive church was the power of excluding persons from their community. This power was possessed by each christian assembly. The peo-

ple voted, and the pastor declared the exclusion. None were excluded but enormous offenders, who could not be brought to repentance. Even they were re-admitted on a future reformation. No corporal punishment, no fine, no exile, no civil incapacity followed. Thus stood the matter in the first three centuries, the best and purest ages of christianity. See *Mosheim. Cent. i. part ii. c. 3.*

From the time of Constantine the great, excommunication became truly infernal; for the barbarous nations, which were converted to christianity, considered christian ministers as a kind of druids, and the Roman pontiff as the ARCH DRUID, hence they confounded the *excommunication* in use among christians with *that*, which had been practised in the times of paganism by the priests of the gods, and considered them as of the same nature and effect. Dr. Maclaine, from whom I quote this, gives us a remarkable passage from Cæsar (*De bel. Gall. vi. 13.*) in proof of druidical tyranny, and rightly observes, that the Roman pontiffs were too artful not to countenance the error of introducing it into christianity. *Mosheim. Cent. viii. part ii. c. 2. 6. p.*

teenth of Acts we are told, *his spirit was stirred*, when he saw the idolatry and superstition of the Athenians. Elsewhere, he says, *if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy*. In all these there is a force: but nothing like what appears in these reiterated words, *though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you, than that, which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached, let him be accursed*. Why so? because the apostle speaks here of an *essential* corruption of the gospel, (4) which the false apostles aimed at in the churches of Galatia; they were anni-

(4) *S. Paul speaks of an essential corruption of the gospel.*

The gospel is in general that system of religion, which Jesus Christ taught. This religion adapts itself to the relief of the three principal causes of human misery, *error, guilt and vice*. Agreeably to this view, Jesus Christ executes three offices, he, as a prophet gives us a revealed body of instruction, and so removes error; as a priest he atones for our sins, and intercedes for our salvation, and so takes away guilt and future punishment; and as a king he gives us statutes of divine worship, which regulate conduct towards God, and moral laws, which regulate personal and social action, he will reward virtue, punish vice, and thus destroy sin and establish holiness. A

man, who denies the sufficiency of the holy scriptures, does essentially corrupt the gospel: he, who allows it, and yet mistakes the meaning of them, does not; he is constitutionally right: but accidentally wrong. The same may be said of the other branches of the gospel.

The circumstantial of religion may be corrupted, and the fundamentals may not. The fundamentals may be corrupted in part, or in the whole. The conduct of christians must be regulated by an exact state of the case, which, by the way, is sometimes extremely difficult to come at. What a lesson of moderation may we learn here! An example from Saurin will presently explain our meaning.



annihilating the grace of Christ by associating it with the mosaick œconomy; they aimed at the entire ruin of the church by debasing the purity of the gospel. (5) In this case the conscience of this good man could contain no longer, he stretched his zeal and vehemence as far as possible, he became inexorable and pronounced anathemas; nothing prevented him, neither the authority of the greatest men, no nor yet the dignity of the glorious angels, *if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel, let him be accursed.* (6)

## XXV.

(5) *False apostles debased the gospel.* Καθαπερ γαρ εν τοις βασιλικοις νομισμασιν ο μικρον του χαρακτηρος περικοψας ολον το νομισμα κιβδηλον ειργασατο, ουτω και οτης υγιους πιστεως και το βραχυτατον ανατρεψας τω παντι λυμαινεται, επι τα χειρονα προιον απο της

αρχης. Chrysost. op. tom. iii. in Galat. i. 7.

Athenienses (inquit Dou-næus in Not. in Chrysost.) odio Chiorum adulterinis suis nummis χ. figuram inscul-pentes, in detestationem eorum objiciebant, quod per-fidi fuissent focii. Hinc for-sitan Theognis.

Χρυσου κιβδηλοιο καὶ ἀργύρε ἀνσχετος ἄτη,  
Κύρνε, καὶ ἐξευρεῖν ῥάδιον ἀνδρὶ σοφῷ.  
Ἐὶ δὲ φίλος νόος ἀνδρὸς ἐνὶ γήδεσσι λεληθε  
Ψεδνὸς ἑὸν, δόλιον δ' ἐν φρεσὶν ἦτορ ἔχει.  
Τέτο θεὸς κιβδηλότατον ποίησε βροτοῖσι,  
Καὶ γινῶναι πάντων τέτ' ἀνιηρότατον.

Auri adulterini et argenti tolerabile detrimentum,  
Cyrne; et invenire facile est viro sapienti:  
Si autem amici mens viri in pectoribus latuerit  
Tenuis existens, dolosumque in præcordijs cor habeat;  
Hoc Deus fucatifissimum fecit hominibus,  
Et cognitu omnium hoc difficillimum,

Θεογν. γνῶμαι. 119.

(6) *Other foundation can no man lay, &c.* Saurin ob-serves, "S. Paul speaks of

three sorts of preachers.  
1. Such as lay another foun-dation; with these we have  
no

## XXV.

## OBSERVE DIFFERENT INTERESTS. (7)

Thus, if you are explaining the miracle, which Jesus Christ wrought in the Synagogue on a Sabbath-day, when he healed the withered hand in the

no other concern than that to which charity obliges us: but what a sad condition must that man be in, who devotes his life and learning to lay another foundation; who says, You have heard it said of old time by Jesus Christ, *Search the scriptures*, but I say unto you, the scriptures are dangerous, &c. &c. ? The second sort are those, who *build upon this foundation wood, hay, stubble*, &c. and the third sort are such as *build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones*. These two sorts are in our churches, and I place them in different classes. In the first class I oppose a ministry spent in agitating questions of mere curiosity, against that, which is employed in demonstrating the gospel. In a second class I oppose discourses of mere speculation, which tend only to exercise the mind, against those practical discourses, which sanctify the heart, which make the child obedient to his father, &c. In a third class I place the productions of a trifler ascrib-

ing his own imaginations to the holy ghost, and giving religion I know not what marvellous glare, more fit to dazzle children than to satisfy prudent men, against the labours of those ministers, who always walk with the light of the gospel in their hands, and infallible truth for their guides," &c. &c. After adding two classes more, he says, "but I'll venture no farther, and I sacrifice to charity all the details, of which the subject is capable. I will not even mention here what such are threatened with as prefer *hay* and *stubble* before *gold, silver, and precious stones*; nor what belongs to those, who teach such doctrines: let them weigh the apostle's words, *shall be saved, yet so as by fire*. Let preachers think what account they will give of their ministry; and let hearers ask how they will account for their time, and their superstitious docility." *Saur. ser. tom. x. ser. quatrieme.*

(7) *Different interests.* This beautiful topick of illustration

the presence of the Herodians and Pharisees ; you may remark the different *interests* of the spectators in that act of our Lord Jesus ; for on the one hand, *Moses* and his religion seemed interested therein two ways. 1. This miracle was done on a *day*, in which *Moses* had commanded them to do no manner of work. And 2. This was done in a *synagogue* consecrated to the mosaick worship, so that it was in a manner insulting *Moses* in his own house.

Farther,

tion may serve for a clue to many passages of scripture, to almost all history profane and sacred, and to numberless affairs, which are daily transacted before our eyes. It supposes, as all these modes of illustration do, a true fact. Different men have divers interests, and divers interests operate different sentiments. Suppose a man to place all his happiness in sensual gratifications, the gratifying of his senses will become his main interest, and this disposition will beguile his reason, and form his opinions. Suppose another to place his glory in popular applause, this passion for vulgar praise will make him avoid a profession, yea an examination of truth, lest it should tarnish his beauty in the publick eye. Suppose even a good man under a momentary unworthy influence, and for that moment he will pursue a track contrary to his general course of action, and do for a moment

what he has hated for a month.

On this ground we plead for two things as essential to the illumination of the mind, and the sanctification of the heart. 1. External objects to be presented by the word of God. And 2. Internal influence to sway the mind and the heart, to depress bad dispositions, and to impart and strengthen good ones. A disinterested state of mind is, assuredly, the best of all previous qualifications in a student of divinity : but those modes of education, which form secular interests, before they propose religious truths to examination, effect a total subversion of reason and religion.

As different interests sometimes divide men, so at other times they fall into one common interest, and unite them. The Pharisees hated the Herodians, and Herod detested Pilate : yet all agreed in opposing and destroying Jesus Christ. Luke xxiii. 12. Mat. xxii. 16.



Farther, the *Herodians*, who were particularly attached to the person of Herod, either for political reasons, or for some others unknown, were obliged to be offended; for this miracle had a tendency to prove Christ's Messiahship, and thereby (as was commonly thought.) his right to the kingdom of Israel, and consequently this must blacken the memory of Herod, who endeavoured to kill him in his infancy. (8) The *Pharisees* were no less interested, for they considered Christ as their reprover and enemy, and could not help being very much troubled, whenever they saw Jesus Christ work a miracle. Observe the interest of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, his concern was to do good, wherever he had an opportunity, and to glorify God his father,

(8) *Herodians*. Divines entertain various opinions concerning the Herodians. Some think, they were *pagans*, to whom Herod had given lands in Judea. Others suppose, they were officers and *soldiers*, who guarded Herod: This is the opinion of Jerom and Chrysostom. Others say, they were the *domesticks* of Herod. Epiphanius, and many after him, affirm, they were Jews, who flattered Herod by maintaining that *he* was the Messiah. Origen thought, it was a nickname given by the Pharisees and zealots to those, who held that it was lawful to pay *tribute* to Herod. It is certain, they were a court party, as the Pharisees were the popular party, and most likely they were Sadducees.

Dean Prideaux derives the appellation from Herod, and supposes the Herodians to have been the followers of Herod in the *two* principal tenets, in which he differed from the Jews. 1. The law forbade the Jews to *set a stranger over them for a king*. Deut. xviii. 15. Herod and the Herodians understood the command only of a voluntary election, and not of a necessary submission, and on this ground they asserted the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cæsar. 2. Herod and the Herodians thought it lawful for Jews to comply with pagans in matters of religion, and to become occasional conformists to them. These two principles distinguished the sect. *Connect.* part ii. b. v.

father, by confirming the word of his gospel by acts of infinite power. The *poor afflicted man* had a double interest in it, the healing of his body, and the improvement of his mind.

Thus this action of Jesus Christ, having divers relations, becomes as it were a point, whence many lines may be drawn, one on this side, another on that, and hence arise the different remarks, which may be made upon it. (9)

(9) *Different interests.* Massillon in a sermon on Christmas-day composes by this topick. "God and man are interested in Christ's birth.

1. *God's* glory was concerned. For *idolatry* had transferred that worship to others, which was only due to him. *Formality* prevailed among the Jews, and they rendered him a service not worthy of him. *Philosophy* had conveyed away the glory of his providence and eternal wisdom. Three daring insults, which mankind offered to God, and which Christ came to remove.

2. The peace of *mankind* was interested in Christ's birth, for they had robbed one another of that—by pride—by voluptuousness—by revenge. Christ's grace heals the first—his doctrine the se-

cond—his example the last—" *Pour Noel. Avent.*

So again, "Mat. ii. 2. *We have seen his star and we come to worship him.* The star, like the gospel, directing to Christ, meets with worshippers in the wise men—in the priests, dissemblers—in Herod, a persecutor—So it is with the gospel now, a few receive it—many disguise it—more still despise and persecute it. Thus, we are to treat, 1. Of the truth admitted. 2. The truth disguised. 3. The truth persecuted, either by the practice of libertines whose conduct runs it down; or by people of pleasure who exaggerate their own happiness, and the difficulties of christianity; or by fools who mock and deride it." *Mass. Avent. pour le jour de l'Épiphanie.*

## XXVI.

## DISTINGUISH. DEFINE. DIVIDE.

To speak properly, we distinguish when we consider a thing in different views. (1) As, for example, Faith is considerable either objectively, or subjectively. In the view of its *object* faith  
is

(1) *Distinguish*. They say, Qui bene distinguit bene arguit. There is no maxim more evident. Thus for example. "Heb. ii. 14, 15. Some persons *through fear of death are all their life time subject to bondage*. These persons must be distinguished. 1. Some fear death from a pure *instinct of nature*—2. Some from a principle of *religion*—3. Others from a spirit of *infidelity*—4. Some from an *attachment* to the world—5. Others from a weakness of *imagination*." *Serm. par Bertheau. tom. ii. serm. xii.*

To distinguish is to consider things in different views. Thus we answer a famous question in theology. Was Jesus Christ a *legislator*, as Grotius affirms? *De jure bell. ac. pac.*

Or was he, as a Saxon lawyer affirms, only an *interpreter* of the old law of Moses? *Ziegleri in Grot. Prolegomena.*

The Socinians embrace the first, and the moral part of their system rests on this proposition; Jesus Christ

gave a new, and a milder law than Moses. Other divines take the last proposition, and deduce consequences, we think, incongruous with that idea of a new-testament church, which the apostles give. We deny both the above propositions, and we affirm both, by *distinguishing* the different objects in contemplation. In regard to the *moral* law, that is, those necessary obligations, which arise from the natural relations, that intelligent beings bear to each other, we deny that Jesus Christ was a *legislator*, and we say he was an *interpreter*, an explainer of it, giving by certain facts, which he taught, and by certain works, that he performed, more force to this law than either philosophers had given in natural religion, or Moses in his sanctions. In regard to *positive institutes*, such as baptism, the Lord's supper, and, some add, the sabbath, and rules of church-government, we affirm, Jesus Christ was not a refiner of old rites, an *interpreter*



is the work of Jesus Christ, his word and cross produce it; for take away the death of Jesus Christ and there is no more faith. His resurrection also is the cause of it, *If Jesus Christ is not risen, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins.* But if you consider faith in regard to its *subject*, or, to speak more properly, in regard to its efficient cause producing it in the subject, it is the work of the Holy Ghost. So again (to use the same example.) faith may be considered with a view to justification, or with a view to sanctification. In the first view it is opposed to works: in the second it is the principle and cause of good works, it contains them in summary and abridgment. (2)

Thus

interpreter of old institutes: but a *legislator*. It is indeed generally said—that baptism is circumcision purified—the Lord's supper the passover refined—and church discipline pagan and Jewish maxims of polity and jurisprudence purified: but no proof of these popular notions can be adduced. The baptism of Jewish proselytes was probably taken from John the baptist, certainly it is not so ancient as many pretend. See *Dr. Gill's Dissertation on this subject, Body of Div. vol. iii.*

Nothing can be of greater consequence in theological debates than just and necessary *distinction*. Confusion of ideas produces confusion of subjects, and this confusion of arguments. It would be easy to produce a volume of

examples, in which, it would evidently appear, the disputants had not disentangled the point in debate, and had therefore affirmed one thing and proved another, and so demonstrated nothing at all but their own carelessness.

(2) *Faith includes good works.* Gregory speaking of the converted thief says, "His hands and his feet are bound, his whole body is upon the rack, he has nothing free but his heart and tongue; *with his heart he believes unto righteousness, and with his mouth he makes confession unto salvation.*

Those divines, who deny the necessity of good works in order to salvation, adduce in proof the case of the thief converted on the cross. Others have replied, the thief performed all the good

Thus man may be considered with a view to *civil* society, so he is obliged to such and such duties,

works, that his condition would admit of; consequently, his conversion proves against you.

The accounts given us by ecclesiastical writers, of such divines as have denied the necessity of good works in order to salvation, are very fallacious. John Agricola, a native of Islebe, or Ayslebe in Saxony, is called the father of the Antinomians. Luther suppressed Agricola's doctrine as well as he could, and his notions concerning the use of the law have been grossly misrepresented by the disciples of that reformer. They, who were called Antinomians in the time of the protectorate in England, and their great patron Dr. Crisp, have been served in the same manner. Dr. Crisp was a man of eminent piety, on whose character malice itself dare not cast a shade. Agricola never acted an Antinomian part but once. He assisted Pflug and Helling in drawing up, by order of Charles V. that curious system of theology called the *INTERIM*, a temporary creed to be believed and taught for *trust*, till it should suit the emperor to publish another. This was a rank antinomian action, and I could never forgive this heathen for prostituting the conscience of a

whole empire to please the emperor, were I not obliged to involve other compilers of interims in the same sentence of condemnation. God help us, what a world is this! The maker of the creed was an Antinomian, and the subscribers to it were all pious and orthodox divines, whose names preserve the odour of sanctity to this day!

Dr. Mosheim says, in Cromwell's time there sprang up "a certain *sect of presbyterians*, who were called *antinomians* or enemies of the law, and they still subsist." This is one of the many inaccuracies of this excellent historian. We have no such *sect*. Antinomianism is a sort of surfeit, which in *all* churches has been found to succeed a plenty of evangelical preaching. When the merit of works is exploded, when free justification is preached, when the unworthy are encouraged to hope for a free pardon of all their sins, and so on; it is generally seen, some zealous preachers overshoot the mark, and generate doctrinal antinomianism. One plain distinction, methinks, would prevent error on this article. Good works are not essential to *justification*. Good works are essential to *salvation*.

duties, and partakes of such and such advantages, or he may be considered with regard to *church-fellowship*, and so he is subject to other laws and enjoys other privileges. This custom of distinguishing into different views is very common in preaching. (3)

DEFI-

(3) *Distinguish*. Thus Saurin on Luke xxiii. 34. "*Father forgive them for they know not what they do*. Some say, this expression is not strictly true, but it is an overflow of affection in Jesus Christ, like the desire of Moses to be *blotted out of the book of life*; and the *wish* of S. Paul to be *accursed*. We dare not adopt this system in regard to the Lord Jesus. We actually believe, the ignorance of these murderers of Christ diminished their crime; for, we must *distinguish* three sorts of ignorance. There is 1. An *invincible* ignorance, in which the will has no part. It is an insult upon divine justice to suppose, it will punish men because they were ignorant of things, which they were physically incapable of knowing. 2. There is a *wilful* and obstinate ignorance; such an ignorance, far from exculpating, aggravates a man's crimes. There is 3. A sort of ignorance which is neither *entirely* wilful, nor *entirely* invincible, as when a man has the means of knowledge and does not use them.

The ignorance of these murderers of Christ was of the last kind." Saur. tom. i. *priere de J. C. pour ses bourreaux*.

So again on Judas's despair. "Despair must be distinguished. 1. From a *malady*. 2. From a rigorous but paternal *chastisement*, wherewith the Lord, sometimes, by suspending the effects of his love tries the greatest saints. 3. From the exercises of *penitence*. A man very much shocked at the baseness of his past sinful conduct, and trembling for the consequences does not despair, this is not despair, this is a virtue." *Sur le desespoir de Judas*, tom. i.

Here follows another example from a learned professor of Divinity in the French reformed university at Saumur. "An *Ecclesia possit errare*?" Whether the church can err? We will explain, says he, this question, by *distinguishing* the meaning of each word. The word *church* either stands for those, who *profess* christianity, or for those, who are *really* christians. Real christians may be considered *collectively*, in a body;



## DEFINITION.

This is sometimes used when an act of God is spoken of, as the pardon of our sins—the justification

body; or *distributively*, in separate congregations; or *individually*, in particular persons." The object in contemplation being thus distinguished, the question is easily answered. If we take the word church in the first sense, it includes the *Greek church*, the *Roman church*, the *reformed churches*, &c. Who will pretend to say, these cannot err? They mutually tax each other with error. The other meanings of the word make the question equally plain.

Our professor goes on. "The word *err* may be taken 1. *Subjectively*, as it respects the erroneous person, who may err either *wilfully*, and *obstinately*, or *sincerely*, and *conscientiously*; and farther, who may fall into error for a *time*, or may *continue* in it for ever. 2. The word *err* may be considered *objectively*, for there are *fundamental errors*, and *circumstantial errors*."

"The third distinction regards the word *possit*; for it may be taken *absolutely*; for that is possible, considered in itself, which implies no contradiction: or it may be considered *hypothetically*, for a

thing possible in itself may be *impossible to us*, because God has otherwise determined it. Multum interest igitur scire, *quo sensu negandum, aut affirmandum sit Ecclesiam posse errare.*" *Cameron Prælect. tom. i. de Eccles.*

I wish, they at Rome, who profess infallibility, and others at home, who act on the presumption of their possessing it, would condescend to make a few of these necessary distinctions, for the ease of their oppressed brethren's consciences. When I take this *hierarchical datum* into examination, *the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies*, it crumbles all to pieces in my hands. I ask, of whom speak these prophets? of themselves, or of some other men? Who is the church? The common people of England? Have they power to decree rites? Is the *convocation* the church? have they power without act of parliament? Is the *house of parliament*, king, lords, and commons, the church? Does this honourable body answer the *scriptural* definition of a church? Or do they answer that definition of a church, which

cation of our persons, &c.—or when a virtue or a vice is in question, for then it may not be improper to define. (4)

Divi.

which the established *articles* give? A thousand questions would arise on the other words, *power, decree, bath, rites, ceremonies*—are they *pagan rites, jewisb rites, popisb rites, moravian rites, &c. &c. &c.* So many distinctions, so many rays of light thrown on abstruse questions.

(4) *Definition.* Nothing seems easier at first sight than definition, yet nothing requires greater skill; for to define a guinea is not to give one and twenty shillings for it, yet (if I may speak so) we have often been served thus in definitions. Had we asked a philosopher some years ago what *matter* was? He would have answered from Aristotle, *that it was what was neither which, nor how great, nor what, nor any thing of what being was determined by. Arist. Phys. lib. i. cap. ult.*

Should you inquire of a botanist now a days what *parsley* is? He would tell you, it is an *umbelliferous plant, whose leaves are divided into fine oblong narrow segments, whose seeds are somewhat crookedly plano-convex, with yellow ridges on the convex side, &c.* All this may be pretty, and even pompous in books: but reduce these de-

finitions to the common uses of life, and who I wonder would understand a word you said? Begging pardon of these gentlemen, into whose provinces we have wandered, may we not naturally suppose, that divinity, having been in the same hands, has met with the same treatment? Should we ask Thomas Aquinas what *faith* is? he would tell us—that *actus primus est forma et integritas rei*,—and that *actus secundus est operatio*,—and that these are either *eliciti, or imperati, &c.* He is not the only one, who has obtained the title of *Doctor Angelicus* for manufacturing such obscurities as these. We have many such scholastick angels still. *Aquin. sum. pars i. Quest. 48. Art. 5.*

“The rules of a good definition (says Dr. Watts) are 1. It must be universal, or adequate. 2. Proper and peculiar to the thing defined, and agree to that alone. 3. Clear and plain. 4. Short, and have no superfluous words, or tautology. 5. Neither the thing defined, nor a mere synonymous name should make any part of the definition.” *Logic. i. 6, 5.*

A class of grave pious men rise up in the church, and re-

## DIVISION.

This either regards different species of the genus, or different parts of a whole, and it may sometimes be used profitably. Thus, in speaking of God's providence in general, you may consider the extent of that providence, to which are subject 1. Natural

recommend a species of religion to me, which they call *mystical Divinity*, a *short way to the deity*, to the *top of the mountain*, to the *third heaven*, to the *darkness in which Jehovah dwells*. I ask them to define this mystical divinity: but it is impossible to get an answer from these provoking writers.

*Mystica theologia*, says one, est *secretissima mentis cum Deo locutio*. Dionys. Carthus. sup. Dion. Myst. Theol.

A second says, Est *animi extensio in Deum per amoris desiderium*. Gerson de Myst. Theol. Spec. Consid. 28.

Again, Est *motio angogica in Deum per purum et fervidum amorem*. Idem Gerson, ibid.

A third affirms, Est *cœlestis quædam Dei notitia per unionem voluntatis Deo adhærentis elicita, vel lumine cœlitus producta*. Joan. a Jesu Maria Myst. Theol. cap. 1.

A fourth calls it *Sapientia experimentalis*. Balb. Cordierius Isag. &c.

I transcribe these from one of these master dreamers,

who, had he been a rational creature, would not have pretended to define a subject which he calls *indoctam sapientiam*, *omni sapientia humana superiore*, by which, adds he, *mens deum suum sine discursibus agnoscit, et quasi contrectat, et sine ratiocinationibus gustat*. It is, continues he, *Res abstracta et difficilis, ac prorsus divina, certis finibus circumscribi nequit, et dialecticorum regulis concludi*. Yet these are the men, who pretend to conduct rational creatures ad *mysticorum oraculorum lucidissimum, indemonstrabile, et summum fastigium*; ad *simplicia et immutabilia theologiæ mysteria*, quæ in *caliginis splendidissima silentii aperiuntur!* Bonæ Cardinalis op. *via compend. ad Deum, per motus anagogicos, et ignitas aspirationes*.

Most of the mystick divines distinguish the mystick life into the *purgative*, which respects the senses; the *illuminative*, that belongs to the reason; and the *unitive*, which belongs to the mind or spirit, the



ral causes. 2. Contingent. 3. Independent. 4. Good and bad. 5. Great and small. (5)

## XXVII.

## COMPARE THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE TEXT TOGETHER.

This is a very useful topick, and it will often furnish very beautiful considerations, if we know how to make a proper use of it. For example, In this text of S. Paul to the Romans, *there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.* You may make a very edifying comparison between this last part, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*, with the first part, *there is no condemnation*; and you may remark, that in the one, the apostle expresses what God does in favour of the faithful, and in the other what the faithful do for the glory of God. God absolves them; and they live holily, and devote them-

the superior part of the soul. The famous Fencelon's *maxims of the saints* are, it is said, made up of these. A learned professor of divinity in a foreign university hath proved, that the whole is derived from the philosophy of Plato. "Mysticam theologiam Platonice philosophiæ originem debere, communis et recepta fere hodie est sententia." *Buddei Anal. Exerc. Hist. Philos. Pythag. Platonica.*

(5) See the whole chapter of Division, vol. i. c. 4. p. 43.

Sit igitur divisio, rerum plurium in singulas partitio, singularum in partes discretus ordo, et recta quædam collatio, prioribus sequentia annectens; dispositio, utilis rerum ac partium in locos distributio. Sed meminerimus ipsam dispositionem plerumque utilitate mutari, nec eandem semper primam questionem ex utraque parte tractandam. *Quint. Inst. lib. vii. cap. 1. de dispositione.*

themselves to good works. God imposes holiness upon us in justification, and justification is the parent of holiness, take away justification, and there cannot possibly be any good works, take away good works and there is no more justification. (6)

You

(6) *God imposes holiness upon us in justification.* Mr. Claude's words are, *la sainteté est la condition.* The word *condition* with us conveys an idea of *power* to perform, and *merit* in performing: but, it is certain, Mr. Claude meant no such thing, for he ascribes all our salvation to the grace of God. As the word *condition* is of very vague and uncertain meaning in the French tongue, sometimes put for place, employment, office, nature, circumstances, &c. *un homme de condition*, is a man of quality — *J'accepte la condition*, I embrace your offer, &c. &c. — as the word is so equivocal, I have given it what I think was Mr. Claude's meaning. Most parties among christians have (if I may be allowed to speak so.) their *church-idiom*, an association of terms forming a peculiar phraseology to themselves: but as a literal translation of a classical author would make bald English, and bad sense, and we should quarrel with the writer for asserting what he never believed, so in religious controversies, we ought to take

people's words in their own sense, not ours, otherwise we may jangle about the letters of the alphabet till we are called to judgment. Indeed, it is not to be wondered at, that protestants have such a hatred to the word *merit*, and many of them to the word *condition*, which, they think, is a slip of the same tree, when it is considered to what a length of blasphemy the ignorance of some in the Romish community have carried it. Their works deserve heaven for themselves, and for their neighbours. If we will believe them, the very devil is afraid of a saint's ashes a thousand years after his death, and the virgin Mary has done more for God than God has done for her, and for all mankind. Plus fecit Maria deo, quam homini deus, Deus quodammodo plus obligetur nobis quam nos sibi. Tu O virgo! solum cecinisti, quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est; ego vero cano et dico, quia tu fecisti majora ei qui potens est. (*Bernardin. senens. serm. 61. et Bern. de bust. Mar. apud Usser de invocat. sanct.*)  
and

You may also compare this last part with the condition in which the believer is here considered; he is *in Christ Jesus*, and remark that these two things perfectly agree together, because Jesus Christ is the true cause of our justification, and sanctification is the principal effect of our communion with Jesus Christ. (7)

So

and hence we are advised by Anselm rather to trust Mary than Christ. *Velocior est nonnunquam salus memorato nomine Mariæ, quam invocato nomine domini Jesu unici filii sui.* (*de excellentia beatæ virg. cap. 6.*) This is horrid! but, after all, do we really think, all the members of that church affix the same meaning to the word *merit* that we do! when they sing, O felix culpa, quæ talem ac tantum MERUIT habere redemptorem; do they indeed think, Adam's sin *deserved* to be rewarded with the redemption of himself and all mankind? do they not rather mean what Dr. Young meant when he said,

Bold thought! shall I dare speak it? or repress?

Should man more *ex crate*, or *boast*, the guilt

Which rous'd such vengeance? which such love inflam'd?  
*Night Thoughts*, N. 4. 209.

See more to this purpose in archbishop Usher's works, chap. xii. *of merits*, where the good bishop proves, that neither the ancient fathers, nor the ancient members of the Romish church held what *we* call the doctrine of merit, though they used the word. Who does not know that words in this age mean what they did not in the last?

(7) *Justification*. Many of our divines have well observed, that on a clear distinction between justification and sanctification depends an accurate knowledge of the whole plan of redemption. When these

two doctrines are confounded, the rest of the system cannot be clear. The first is an act of God *without* us; the last is an operation of his blessed spirit *in* us. These two must be distinguished: but they may not be divided. When they are undistinguished, law and gospel, works and grace, the merit of Christ and the efforts of christians run together into one mass of obscurity and confusion. When they are divided they produce mysticism or libertinism, or both. Many very good men, however, stumble on thus all their days; but we



So again, in this beautiful passage in the second of Ephesians. *God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace are ye saved.* You may oppose and compare these two subjects in the text, *dead in sin*, and *rich in mercy*, as being two extremes, extreme misery, and extreme mercy, one in us, and the other in God. (8) The greatness of our crimes manifest the

are ready to admit that apology for them, which Vossius made for Peter Hinkelman, and others of his day. "Quamquam autem istius farinae scriptores sequius de nobis mereantur, minime tamen par pari damus hostimentum: sed ingenue fatemur utut παραδοξα, imo non pauca αδοξα plane sint, quæ ex eorum libris Canisius, ex Canisio item congestit Bel-larminus: nihilominus nos putare plerosque omnes eorum rectius sentire quam loqui: nec tam oppugnatum ire operam quam fiduciam in bonis operibus collocatum: neque tam eorum necessitatem ad salutem quam salutis meritum condemnare: neque tam impugnare individuum eorum nexum cum fide iustificante, quam coram iustitiæ divinæ throno ad actum justificationis negare concursum. Quæ si ita sunt, quamquam injuria ecclesias nostras incessant, ac in sermone periculosa admodum υπερβολη et illaudabili καλαχρησει utantur: tamen vetus et acerba

istæ inter partes velitatio magnam partem vera fuerit λογομαχία." Ger. Job. Vossii Theol. de bon. operibus. See Downname Bishop of Derry on Justification, lib. ii. c. 6. 19, 20, &c.

(8) You may compare the two parts of the text. This method of elucidation is applicable to arguments in a discourse, as well as to clauses in a text. Thus, for example, S. Paul affirms, *Jesus Christ hath abolished death.* One of our divines observes, "the Jew, Aben Amram, and the Moham-medan, Achmet Ben Abdallah, object, it is most impertinent, absurd and false to affirm that Jesus hath abolished death in any sense at all; for this makes the justice of God go on to exact a debt, when full payment is pretended to have been made. In answer to this reasoning, I shall shew two things. 1. That the principles, on which it stands, are such as the Jew cannot abide by: but all the absurd opinions charged

the riches of God's mercy, and the riches of his mercy absorb the greatness of our crimes. Had our sins been less, it must indeed have been mercy to pardon our sins, but not *riches* of mercy. If  
God

charged upon *our* religion, in this matter, bear full as hard upon, and are equally acknowledged in *his own*.  
2. That the continuance of labour, and sorrow, and bodily death, notwithstanding the apostle's assertion here, that *Jesus Christ hath abolished death*, is most strictly rational and true." Dr. Stanhope's *sixth serm. at Boyle's lecture*.

So again, in regard to the *christian* interpretation of prophecies. "If we bring no *texts* concerning the Messiah, which the *Jews* did not allow to concern him—nor urge them in any *sense* which they did not admit--then I am sure the *Jews* cannot profit themselves of, nor can we fairly be accountable for such pretended incoherencies. It lies upon the synagogue to vindicate itself, &c." *The same, serm. 8.*

Strictly speaking, this method of arguing may operate the silence of an opponent: but it will not produce conviction in him. Positive evidence must do that. However, it has its use. See vol. i. p. 300, &c. vol. ii. p. 174, &c. 193, &c.

Mr. Claude has made two topicks of *comparison*, or contrast. The one (xvi. p. 174.)

is a comparison of one text with *another* text, or one subject with *another* subject. This other (xxvii) is a comparison of one part of the *same* text with another, or one part of a history with another part of the *same* history, and the utility of this method will appear by the following examples.

John xvi. 13. *When the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into ALL truth.* What! will the holy spirit answer *all* the questions, that we may think proper to ask? Will he inform us of the *mode* of the divine existence, suppose? Compare the foregoing words with the following. *He shall not speak concerning HIMSELF.* He shall not acquaint you with the mode of his own existence, and so on. *Whatsoever he shall HEAR that shall he speak,* he shall fix your attention on the truths of revelation, he shall affect your hearts with my doctrines, &c.

Thus a *period* may be compared. *God will have ALL men to be saved—Christ gave himself a ransom for ALL—make prayers for ALL men.* This passage ought not to be urged in the arminian controversy; for a part of this  
period

God had been only lightly inclined to mercy he might indeed have pardoned smaller sins, but this would never have extended to persons *dead* in their sins; this belongs only to extraordinary and abounding mercy. (9)

In

period fixes the sense to *ranks*, or degrees of men. Pray for *KINGS*, and for all that are IN AUTHORITY. The meaning, then, is, pray for all *ranks* and degrees of men, for God will save some of all *orders*—Christ gave himself a ransom for persons of all *degrees*. 1 Tim. ii. 1—6.

Acts xvi. S. Paul baptized Lydia and her *household*, 15.—S. Paul entered into the house of Lydia, and when they had seen the *brethren*, they comforted them, and departed, 40.—S. Paul baptized the jailor, and *all his*, 33.—The jailor rejoiced, *believing* in God with all his house, 34. These passages ought not to be brought in proof of infant-baptism; for a comparison of one part of the history with the other proves that infants were incapable of what is affirmed of the households, or families.

(9) Here our author's topicks end; and, it is to be remembered, they are subject to both use and abuse. Whoever chooses may consult *Quintiliani institutiones orat. lib. v. c. 10. Cicero de oratore, lib. ii. et in topicis. Aristotelis Rhetor. lib. ii. c. 23, 24, &c.* at present we will only add a

note or two, which the intelligent reader will apply himself.

“*Inventio argumentorum, inventio proprie non est. Invenire enim est ignota detegere, non ante cognita recipere, aut revocare. Hujusce autem inventionis usus atque officium non aliud videtur, quam ex massa scientiæ quæ in animo congesta et recondita est, ea quæ ad rem, aut quætionem institutam faciunt, dextre depromere. Nam cui parum aut nihil de subiecto quod proponitur innotuit, ei loci inventionis non profunt; contra, cui domi paratum est, quod ad rem adduci possit, is etiam absque arte, et locis inventionis argumenta tandem (licet non ita expedite, et commode) reperiet et producet. Adeo ut hoc genus inventionis inventio proprie non sit, sed reductio tantum in memoriam, sive suggestio cum applicatione. Attamen quoniam vocabulum invaluit, et receptum est, vocetur sane inventio. Siquidem etiam feræ alicujus venatio, et inventio, non minus cum illa intra vivariorum septa indagetur, quam cum in saltibus apertis, dici possit. Missis* vera



In order to render this chapter more complete, it may not be improper to add an example of the discussion of a text by way of observations. (1)

Let

vero verborum scrupulis, illud constet, scopum et finem hujusce rei, esse promptitudinem quandam, et expeditum usum cognitionis nostræ, potius quam ejusdem amplificationem aut incrementum. *Bacon de Augment. scient. lib. v. c. 3.*

Ἀπαντα μὲν τοι τὰ ἀσεμνὰ,  
διὰ μιαν ἐμφυεται τοῖς λόγοις  
αἰτιαν, διὰ το περὶ τὰς νοήσεις  
καὶ νοσποῦδον. (περὶ οὐδὲν μαλιστα  
κορυφαῖαν τῶν οἱ νυν.) ἀφ' ὧν  
γὰρ ἡμῖν ταγαδα, σχεδὸν ἀπ'  
αὐτῶν τῶν καὶ τὰ κακὰ γιγ-  
νεσθαι φιλεῖ. Οὐδὲν ἐπιφορον  
εἰς συνταγματῶν κατορθῶσιν τὰ  
τε καλλὴ τῆς ἐρμυνείας, καὶ τὰ  
ὕψη, καὶ πρὸς τῶν αἰνῶν  
καὶ αὐτὰ τὰντα, κατὰ περ τῆς

ἐπιτυχίας, ὅτως ἀρχαὶ καὶ  
ὑποθέσεις καὶ τῶν ἐναντιῶν κα-  
διστάνται. Τοιοῦτον πῶς καὶ  
ὑπερβολαί, καὶ τὰ πλεονεύματα.

Omnia quidem quæ sunt ad id indecora, innascuntur scriptis una ex causa, nempe ex studio Novitatis in sensibus proferendis, (qua in re hodierni præsertim scriptores infaniunt) &c. *Longin. de sublim. sect. 5.*

I beg leave to subjoin one topick more, if I may call it so—I mean A HOLY LIFE, without which the most dexterous application of all the above rules is of no avail. Can it be better expressed than in a character of a great divine, drawn by a poet of our own?

His preaching much, but more his PRACTICE wrought,  
(A living sermon of the truths he taught)  
For this *by rules severe his life he squar'd,*  
That all might see the doctrines which they heard:  
For priests, he said, are *patterns* for the rest,  
The gold of heav'n, who bear the God impress'd:  
But when the precious coin is kept unclean,  
The sovereign's image is no longer seen:  
If they be foul, on whom the people trust,  
Well may the baser brass contract a rust. *Dryden.*

(1) *Example of discussion by way of observation.* Our author derives his observations in the following essay from various topicks before-mentioned: but there is one cha-

rafter, in which they all agree; they all aim to *change the heart by informing the mind.* This is what our old divines call the best preaching, *favoury truth, whole-*  
some

Let us take this. 1 Thes. iv. 7. *God hath not called us to uncleanness; but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given unto us his holy spirit.* Let this be divided into two parts; the first, St. Paul's doctrine touching sanctification, *God (saith he) hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness:* and the second, the inviolable divinity of this doctrine;  
*he*

some matter, spiritual doctrine, sound, powerful, searching preaching; and great encomiums they justly bestow on ministers, who prefer this before the more gaudy: but less useful materials of glaring showy sermons, which aim only to tickle the ear. One may speak for all.

“ A powerful searching ministry, that bringeth men to a sight and sense of their sins, is best to fit men for conversion to God. There is a playing with scripture in oratorian flourishes, and a sound inculcation of it - - It is said, Pericles left a sting in the minds of his hearers. That is the best preaching, which woundeth the heart; it is most for the glory of God, and for the good of souls. Speaking pleasing things to tickle the ear better becometh the stage than the pulpit. It is said *The words of the wise are as goads, and nails fastened by the master of assemblies,* Eccles. xii. 11. Words that have a notable acumen in them; some spiri-

tual sharpness to affect the heart, and quicken our dull affections - - He is not a wise preacher, who doth not mind his end, whose speech is fuller of flashes of wit than of savoury wholesome truths, who rather thinketh to please the ear than to awaken the conscience: he doth not act like *the master of assemblies.* They are the best preachers, and most affectionate to you, who wound your souls. The work of a minister is not to gain applause to himself: but souls to God. He is the best preacher, who maketh you go away, and say, not, how well he hath preached! but how ill have I lived!” *Dr. Manton's 1 Sermon on Acts ii. 37, 38.*

Dr. Bates in his funeral sermon for this Dr. Manton applies a pretty historical anecdote from Suetonius to this subject. “ Dr. Manton abhorred a vain ostentation of wit in handling sacred things, so venerable and grave, and of eternal consequence. Indeed what is more unbecoming a minister of  
 Christ

*be therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given unto us his holy spirit.*

As to the first, the sense of the apostle's words is clear; for he means to affirm, when God calls us to the communion of Jesus Christ, and to the hope of his salvation, he does not leave us at liberty to sin, and to follow our own lusts: but he imposes on us a necessity and obligation to good works, and a holy life. Observe 1. It is not only here, that S. Paul declares himself upon this subject: it is a doctrine diffused through all his epistles. In that, which he addresses to the Romans, he employs whole chapters to establish holiness and persuade to the practice of good works; either by conclusive reasoning, or by clear explications, or by exhortations and precepts. He does the same every where else, and to this he refers all the benefits of religion, and all our advantages of knowing God and his mysteries. Herein he follows that general spirit, which animated the Evangelists, and first founders of Christianity. Whichever way you turn your eyes, you will find in these divine men only an ardent desire, and a perpetual design of abolishing the empire of sin, and of making

Christ than to waste the spirits of his brain, as a spider does his bowels, to spin a web only to catch flies, to get vain applause by foolishly pleasing the ignorant? And what cruelty is it to the souls of men? It is recorded, as an instance of Nero's savage temper, that in a general famine, when many were perishing for hunger, he ordered a ship should come from Egypt, the granary of Italy,

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laden with sand for the use of wrestlers. In such extremity, to provide only for delight, that there might be spectacles on the theatre, when the city of Rome was a spectacle of such misery, as to melt the heart of any but a Nero, was most barbarous cruelty: but it is cruelty of a heavier imputation for a minister to prepare his sermons to please the foolish curiosity of fancy with flashy

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making piety and holiness reign in its place. Read the Evangelists, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, in a word all the books of the new-testament, and you will find this the shining character of them all.

These glorious authors have in this, as in every thing else, followed the steps of Jesus Christ their sovereign Lord, who in all his conversation upon earth proposed nothing else but to inspire those, whom he honoured with his presence, with a hatred of sin, and a love of holiness. This appears in all his actions, and in all his sermons, particularly in that admirable one, which he preached on the mount, related by S. Matthew in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of his gospel; there you will find these admirable words, which regard all the faithful, *ye are the salt of the earth, but if the salt have lost his savour wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel: but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all, that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven.* There you will meet with those admirable and important words, so worthy of being eternally engraven upon your hearts, *Except your righteousness shall exceed the*

conceits, nay, such light vanities as would scarce be endured in a scene, while hungry souls languish for want of solid nourishment."

I believe, were an accurate inquisition made to de-

termine what constituted the acumen—the pungent—the dividing asunder of soul and spirit—in a sermon, it would be found to lie in THE TRUTH of what was said,

*the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (2)*

It is evident, that, of all the religions which have hitherto been propagated in the world, no one was ever comparable to the Christian upon the subject of piety and holiness. I grant, all have professed to direct men to this : but they have been so far from excelling in it, that some have confounded all our ideas of vice, by making that pass for virtue, or at least for an indifferent thing, which really was an enormous crime. Others have been defective in enumerating human virtues. Some were content to regulate external actions without troubling themselves about the heart. All together were deficient in their motives to good

(2) *Except your righteousness exceed that of the pharisees.* Mat. v. 20. Mr. Claude's application of this passage to *our* obedience, not to *Christ's* in our stead, is perfectly agreeable to the whole scope of these chapters, in which no mention is made of imputed righteousness, nor does this text seem to belong to that article of our faith.

Those commentators, who include the righteousness of Christ, by which we are justified, do not exclude inherent holiness, which is our sanctification. Thus one, "inherent righteousness, or the sanctification of the spirit, is preferable to any righteousness of a natural man; it exceeds it in its author—nature—effects—and usefulness." *Dr. Gill on the Place.*

Another says, "We must do *more* than the pharisees, and *better* than they, or we shall come short of heaven. They were *partial* in the law, and laid most stress on the ritual part of it: but we must be *universal*, and not think it enough to give the priest his tithe: but must give God our hearts. They minded only the *outside*: but we must make *conscience* of inside godliness. They aimed at the praise of *men*: but we must aim at acceptance with God. They were *proud* of what they did in religion: but we, when we have done all, must *deny ourselves*, and say, *we are unprofitable servants*, and trust only to the righteousness of Christ; and thus we may go beyond Scribes and Pharisees." *Henry on the Place.*

good works, giving only cold and powerless rules, without any arguments taken from our true motives to hate sin, and love holiness. (3)

In

(3) *No religion is comparable to Christianity on the subject of holiness.* All our apologists plead this in proof of the divinity of christianity. By the way, the word *apology*, used by the greek and latin fathers, signified in general a discourse, a plea, a declamation, and they, properly enough, called their arguments apologies for christianity: but with us apology signifies *excuse* for something *wrong*, not *vindication* of what is right. Apologies for *christianity*, therefore, imply too much. To return, The holiness of the gospel is one grand argument for the divinity of it; and what one of the fathers affirmed of it in comparison with paganism may be fairly applied to the simplicity of the worship of some reformed churches in comparison with that of Rome, and other corrupt communities like it. "Quomodo enim deus aut amabit colentem, si ipse non ametur ab eo, aut præstabit precanti quicquid oraverit, cum ad precandum neque ex animo neque observanter accedat? isti autem cum ad sacrificandum veniunt, nihil intimum, nihil proprium diis suis offerunt, non integritatem mentis, non reveren-

tiam, non timorem. Peractis itaque sacrificiis inanibus, omnem religionem in templo, et cum templo, sicut invenerant relinquunt: nihil que secum ex ea neque afferunt, neque referunt. Inde est, quod ejusmodi religiones nec bonos facere possunt, neque firmæ, ac immutabiles esse. Traducuntur ab his homines facile: quia nihil ibi ad vitam, nihil ad sapientiam, nihil ad fidem discitur. Quæ est enim superstitio illorum deorum? quæ vis? quæ disciplina? quæ origo? quæ ratio? quod fundamentum? quæ substantia? quo tendit? aut quid pollicetur, ut ab homine possit fideliter servari, fortiterque defendi? in qua nihil aliud video quam ritum ad solos digitos pertinentem. Nostra vero religio eo firma est, et solida et immutabilis quia justitia docet, quia nobis cum semper est, quia *tota in animo colentis est*, quia mentem ipsam pro sacrificio habet. Illic nihil aliud exigitur quam sanguis pecudum, et fumus, et inepta libatio; hic bona mens, hic purum pectus, innocens vita." *Lactant. Div. Inst. lib. v. c. 20.*

With good reason therefore might Tertullian triumph as he did that every mechanick among Christians knew more than



In all these respects christianity is admirable. There is no vice whatever, which it does not condemn, no virtue, which it does not ordain. It not only regulates the exterior, but it goes even so far as to purify the heart, the source of all our actions. It gives us precepts for all the different states and conditions, in which men can be placed. It maintains the force of its precepts by the most amiable examples, that can be conceived. It affords us in Jesus Christ himself a perfect model, and it accompanies all this with an infinite number of powerful motives, and prevailing reasons. It is, then, in this general spirit of christianity that S. Paul writes these excellent words, *God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness.* (4)

2. But,

than the greatest of the heathen philosophers.

“ Quid enim Thales ille princeps physicorum sciscitanti Cræso de divinitate certum renunciavit, commeatus deliberandi sæpe frustratus? deum quilibet opifex christianus et invenit, et ostendit, et exinde totum quod a deo quæritur, re quoque assignat: licet Plato affirmet factitatorum universitatis neque invenire facilem, et inventum enarrari in omnes difficilem.” *Tertul. Apol. c. 46.*

(4) *Holiness is the general spirit of christianity.* Since this is undeniable, since as all man’s misery consists in the loss of God’s favour, and image; and one great end of redemption is to restore us to the former, and re-impress us with the latter; and since

this is the end of all ordinances, for *who is Paul? or what is Apollos* but instruments of this? how strange is it that other things should be made the substance of the gospel, and this, this for the sake of which the whole stands, as a building for its inhabitant, this grand article of *sanctification* should be coldly treated, or intirely neglected? It is coldly treated, when ministers after they have spent an hour in clearing and proving a controverted point, just for two minutes lightly add, it is needless to dwell upon the fruits of this faith, for if the people be partakers of this grace, it will *teach them to deny ungodliness, and to live soberly.* Did Jesus Christ and his apostles do so? Did the primi-

2. But, beside all this, I cannot help remarking, S. Paul does not content himself with proposing, in general, that the end of the Christian religion is to sanctify men; but he makes a particular application of it to his Thessalonians, to whom he addresses his epistle, God (says he) hath not called *us* to uncleanness but to holiness. As he ardently loved that people, he did not content himself with general instructions concerning maxims of

primitive Christians do so? Did they treat holiness in such a trite, jejune manner? Certainly not. It is sometimes intirely neglected, by placing it in what it does not consist. Holiness is neither zeal for forms nor against them; but it is a conformity to the blessed God. How much pressed in primitive days let any one judge.

Thus Clemens Romanus. **ΗΜΕΙΣ ΟΥΝ ΑΓΟΝΙΣΩΜΕΘΑ** ευρεθῆναι ἐν τῷ ἀριθμῷ τῶν ὑπομενουμένων αὐτοῦ, ὡς μεταλαβόμεν τῶν ἐπηγγελμένων δωραίων. Πῶς δὲ εἶναι τὸ αὐτῶν; εἰ ἐξηριγμένη ἡ ἡ διανοία ἡμῶν πίστεως πρὸς τὸν θεόν - - - εἰ ἐπιτελῶμεν τὰ ἀνηκόντα τῇ ἀρμῳῳ βουλήσει αὐτῶν. *Sec. Clem. Rom. Ep. 1. ad Corinth.*

To the same purpose Polycarp. **Ο ΘΕΟΣ ἡμᾶς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγείρει, εἰάν ποιοῦμεν αὐτοῦ τὸ θέλημα,** καὶ πορευόμεθα ἐν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀγαπῶμεν ἀ ἀγάπησεν, ἀπεχόμενοι πάσης

ἀδικίας. - - ο γὰρ ἐχὼν ἀγαπῇν μακρὰν ἐστὶ πάσης ἀμαρτίας. *Polycarpi Epist. ad Philip.*

And thus Ignatius. Οὐδεὶς πίστιν ἐπαγγελλόμενος ὀφείλει ἀμαρτανεῖν. - - - οἱ ἐπαγγελλόμενοι χριστὸν εἶναι οὐκ ἐξ ὧν λεγούσι μόνον, ἀλλὰ ἐξ ὧν ΠΡΑΤΤΟΤΣΕΙ γνωρίζονται· ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ καρπῶ τοῦ δένδρου γινώσκεται ΑΜΕΙΝΟΝ ΕΣΤΙ ΣΙΩΠΑΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΝΑΙ, Η ΛΑΛΕΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΗ ΕΙΝΑΙ· οὐκ ἐν λόγῳ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει. Καρδία πίστευεται, σωματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται· τῇ μὲν εἰς δικαιοσύνην· τῷδε εἰς σωτηρίαν. **ΚΑΛΟΝ ΤΟ ΔΙΔΑΣΚΕΙΝ ΕΑΝ Ο ΛΕΓΩΝ ΠΟΙΗ.** ὅς γὰρ ἀν ποιήσῃ καὶ διδάξῃ, οὗτος μέγας ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ· ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν καὶ θεὸς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζώντος **ΠΡΩΤΟΝ ΕΠΟΙΗΣΕ, ΚΑΙ ΤΟΤΕ ΕΔΙΔΑΞΕΝ.** *Ignat. Epist. ad Ephesios.*

There would be no end of quotations of this kind, all proving that (however people now-

of Christianity, he would have them make a holy application of these to themselves, and put them in practice; for without this the truths of religion may be useless, or, to speak more properly, they are rather hurtful than profitable; the Lord says, *he that knows his master's will and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.* (5)

The

now-a-days consider the doctrines of grace) this grand article of *sanctification* through the blood of the cross, and the aids of the holy ghost, was the true, genuine spirit of primitive Christianity.

(5) *Without practice the truths of religion may be useless - - or hurtful.* There is not one single doctrine in all the christian system, which doth not reduce itself to practice; and this is the glory of the system. The doctrine of God requires the practice of *worshipping* him. The *unity* of God requires the practice of *sole* worship of him. The *spirituality* of God requires mental *spiritual* worship. His *justice* is an object of *fear*; his *goodness* a ground of *hope*; and so on.

The same may be affirmed of the doctrine of *PROVIDENCE*. The *superintendence* of God requires the *assiduity* of his servants. The *obscurity* of providence requires the *patience* of good men. The *equity* of the governor requires the *confidence* of the governed; and so on.

The knowledge of these, and other truths of religion, we often say with Mr. Claude, may be useless and pernicious, when unaccompanied with practice: but, strictly speaking, libertines, who pretend to this knowledge, pretend to more than they possess; for they have viewed the truths of religion only on one side; they have not seen them in their connection, order, and dependence; their knowledge, therefore, is partial and incompetent, and to them may be applied the words of the prophet, *It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.* Isai. xxvii. 11.

It is curious to see the various shapes into which divines have cast the doctrine of *speculation*. Paschal has proved, that Lessius, Filiutius, Escobar, and other Jesuits, in their systems of moral divinity, allow murder, and many other crimes to be *lawful* in speculation, and only



The apostle then would stir up the Thessalonians to holiness, and in order to do so more effectually he joins himself with them, and acknowledges that himself, as well as the people at Thessalonica, was under the same obligation. God (saith he) hath not called *us* to uncleanness but to holiness. There is not one person in the church exempt, it is a common duty, a rule without exception, and against which no privilege can be alleged, it is not saying, I am an apostle, or I am not; I am a minister, or I am not; I am in an eminent station in the church or in the world, or I have

only not *safe* in practice, on account of political consequences. In plain English, If a man slap your face, you ought to punish the affront by killing him, if you can avoid hanging for doing so. *Provincial Letters*, l. xiii. See the subject at large in *Hospitalian. Hist. Jesuitica*.

The calvinist divines consider a contemplation of sinning as a kind of mental immorality, and name it *speculative wickedness*. Of this kind, they say, are impure dreams, and all contemplative enjoying pleasures, and acting over sins in the mind. See *Dr. Goodwin*, vol. iii. b. vi. c. 4.

Monks and mysticks consider contemplation as the highest degree of moral excellence, and with them a silent speculator is a divine man, while practical christians, who are the pillars of society, are reputed hereticks

or *the world*, as their cant phrase is.

Among protestants, speculation runs into various fantastical forms. In some communities, the belief of speculative points, not reducible to practice, is a test of *orthodoxy*. In others it is the *evidence* of interest in Christ. In others, again, an effort of fancy is essential to the *piety* of a religious action. What was that casuist thinking of, who wrote *the practice of piety*, when he said, "that all communicants, at the article of their receiving, should imagine the posture of Christ upon the cross?" To speculate is to meditate—to contemplate—to take a view of any thing with the mind. This is an operation of intelligence, and God himself exercises it. There is neither virtue nor vice in mere contemplation. A mental approbation of an improper action

have no distinction in either; nobody will mind me, or take me for an example; all these are vain subterfuges: the law of holiness is the law of all, it obliges the great and the small, the young and the

action may be involuntary, then it is an infirmity to be pitied; and it may be voluntary, and laid in the mind as ground of future action in the life, and then, undoubtedly, it is to be abhorred; it resembles an iniquitous law of a corrupt legislator.

Speculation with approbation forms an important branch of ministerial science, particularly in *two* cases. 1. Mental approbation of a virtuous action, or a virtuous course of action, although the speculator have not power to reduce his plan to practice, is virtue. It argues a good state of mind sanctified by divine grace. To this belong holy resolutions, the grounds of holy actions. See Psal. ci. *I will walk in my house with a perfect heart*, &c. 1 Kings viii. 18. *It was in thine heart to build an house—Thou shalt not build an house—but thou didst well, that it was in thine heart.* See 2 Cor. viii. 12.—Rom. vii. 18. &c. The discussion of this article is necessary to the consolation of many pious souls, whose plans are noble, though their powers are feeble. Such persons often dis-

treff themselves on account of their weakness, and criminate themselves also for the evil of their thoughts: but they ought to distinguish those sinful thoughts, which they approve, from others, which they abhor, and such weaknesses as are voluntary, from others, which are not so; for the religion or irreligion of speculation lies in that *approbation* of virtue or vice, that *accompanies* it.

2. Mental approbation of vice, although the speculator have not power to realize his plan, is vice, and argues a depraved state of heart. The emperor Caligula was a monster of iniquity, and historians justly impute to him the guilt of intentional crimes, which he never perpetrated. He left at his death a large box filled with various poisons, and two lists of names of persons doomed to die, the one entitled *Gladus*, the other *Pugio*. By diving into the human heart, and by developing and exposing iniquitous plans of action, actually impracticable, christian preachers detect hypocrites, and discover the exceeding turpitude of fallen men. 1 John iii. 15. *Who-*  
*soever*

the old, pastors and flocks, magistrates and people; both sexes, every age, every condition; all are under this law without any distinction, for *God hath not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness.* (6)

## 3. More-

*noever* HATETH his brother is a murderer. Psal. xiv. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.* John xv. 24. *They have hated me, and my father.* Rom. viii. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* One of our divines says, "Sin is called by some *Deicide*, a slaughtering of God; because every sin, being enmity against God, doth virtually include in its nature the destruction of God." *Charnock's two Discourses—on enmity against God.* Sueton. vit. Calig. c. 49.

(6) *The law of holiness is the law of all.* Thus beautifully amplified by Saurin. "La loi de la sainteté que je prêche aujourd'hui est pour vous nos maîtres et nos souverains. Arbitres de vos propres loix, vous ne voyez aucun mortel sur la terre, auquel vous deviez rendre compte de votre conduite: mais, il y a un Dieu au ciel, dont vous êtes vous-mêmes les sujets et les créatures, et qui veut que vous soyez saints. La loi de la sainteté est pour vous, sacrificateurs et Levites de la nouvelle alliance. Bien loin que le sacré caractère, dont vous êtes revêtus, vous dispense d'être saints, il vous

y engage d'une manière plus étroite et plus pressante. Cette Loi est pour vous tous mes chers auditeurs, de quelque ordre, de quelque profession, de quelque rang, que vous puissiez être. Si vous êtes la génération élue, la sacrifice royale, le peuple acquis, vous devez être aussi la nation sainte; afin d'annoncer les louanges de celui qui vous a appelés des ténèbres à la merveilleuse lumière. Quelque prérogative que Moïse ait eue par dessus nous, nous avons le même ordre à vous prescrire, et la voix du ciel nous dit aujourd'hui comme à lui: *parle à toute l'assemblée des enfans d'Israël, et dis leur, soyez saints, car je suis saint.*" *Saurin ser. sur la sainteté.* tom. iv.

"Honorare, et non imitari, nihil est aliud quam mendaciter adulari. Christus pro nobis passus est, relinquens nobis exemplum ut sequamur vestigia ejus. Quis est, quem pudeat dicere, impar sum deo? plane impar. impar sum Christo? etiam mortali Christo impar. Petrus hoc erat quod tu. Paulus hoc erat quod tu. apostoli et Prophetæ hoc erant, quod tu. Si piget imitari dominum, imitare



3. Moreover, these words must be understood in good earnest, and without deceit. Some perhaps may say, "true, *God does not call us to uncleanness*, that is, in calling us, he does not command us to sin: but it does not follow, that he has absolutely forbidden it; for there are many things, which God does not command: but which also he does not forbid; he leaves us at liberty, he permits many oblique practices, and will not condemn us if we do them. I understand, then, says one, that God indeed has not commanded us to be unholy, but he allows us to be so, and will not be offended when we sin." This is a criminal subterfuge. The true sense of the apostle's words, *God has not called us to uncleanness*, is not barely that God has not commanded us to sin; for who imagines he has? or who can entertain an opinion so contrary to the ideas, which all men have of God? but the apostle means, God *hath* forbidden it, and his adding *but unto holiness* makes his meaning plain and indisputable. (7)

Sin

*imitare conservum. Coronatur rusticitas, non excusatur vanitas.*" *Ang. serm.* 325. tom. v. p. 893.

(7) *God allows what is not forbidden.* Mr. Claude justly reprobates this dangerous axiom; so I call it, for it lies at the bottom of some mighty fabricks. We have before observed, that positive law is *essentially necessary* to positive obedience. vol. i. 216. vol. ii. 130. Hireling priests laugh at this article, and forge lies to keep themselves in countenance. "A cer-

tain puritan, says a great learned doctor, scrupled paying his rent, because his landlord could not produce a text of scripture in proof of his right to demand it; and this is the cant of all the non-conformists, they will do nothing but what they have scripture for." Why, you rogue of Babylon! you great mass of corruption, putrifying in prunella! have you not sworn, that "Athanasius's creed may be proved by most certain warrants of holy scripture;" and do you

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wonder,

Sin and holiness are incompatible with God's calling, because they are incompatible with communion with him, and it is in their nature to deprive us of the manifestations of his love. *His eyes are too pure to behold iniquity*, and it is for this reason that he says, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*. We are called to be conformed to the image of his son, and his son is righteous, *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners*. We are called to be *temples of the holy ghost*, where corruption and sin can have no authority.

I acknowledge, sins committed after the faithful are called do neither cut them off from the mercy of God, nor from a right to salvation, nor entirely from a hope of obtaining it: they do not separate them from communion with Jesus Christ their redeemer, nor make them cease to be temples of the holy ghost: if this were the case, the condition of believers would be very miserable. Yet, it is certain, sin in general extremely beclouds all these advantages, and very much diminishes both their former value, and our future desires after such enjoyments; and the greater and more fre-

wonder, after this, that we call for chapter and verse for every thing? A man, who can prove that creed by scripture, may prove any thing by it. But seriously, a distinction should be made between *moral* and *positive* institutes. Moral obedience is founded in the nature of things, and particular duties are enforced by general commands. *Thou shalt not steal* forbids all fraud, and enjoins all sorts of equity. It is not

necessary, therefore, to find a moral command for every branch of moral rectitude. But the case is widely different in regard to *positive* institutes. The christian mode of divine worship is a course of action founded on positive commands, and wholly regulated by them; and on this ground we reject every thing in divine worship not commanded. For example, we ask why christians celebrate Easter, and keep Lent, and

frequent our backslidings are, the more will our communion with God and Jesus Christ be interrupted and disturbed. Moreover, it is certain, the love and tenderness, which God has for the believer, when in a state of justification, expresseth itself in a paternal displeasure, when he falls into sin, and hence come those chastisements and strokes of his rod, with which he visits them; and hence also those disquieting horrors of conscience, with which the faithful are sometimes agitated.

In brief, it is certain, the paternal love, and royal mercy of God for a believer fallen into some enormous crime, and those remains of communion, which the backslider yet has with Jesus Christ, only subsist upon assurance of the repentance and return of this rebellious child; so that it will always remain true, nothing is more opposite to the divine vocation than sin, as there is nothing more opposite to the life, and natural functions of the body than the ravages of a burning malignant fever, which of itself tends to death,  
and

and fasts and festivals? The incorporating of these rites into the religion of Jesus originated somewhere. They are no parts of the *moral* law—they are no where *positively* instituted by Jesus Christ—they are, therefore, human *traditions* to us, and they were human *institutes* to our ancestors, who appointed them.

The damage done to religion by the sign of the cross in baptism does not so much lie in two strokes of a priest's finger, as in previously ad-

mitting the destructive *principle* on which it is grounded. Before I can add any ceremony to a positive institute, I must necessarily affirm *my* right of religious legislation. Now this principle once admitted, popery follows. It is *your* will, that your infant should be christened and crossed. It is *my* will, that every tenth year you shall plough and sow the whole parish, and I will reap it. It is the will of the *bishop*, that I should pay him a part of the plunder. It is the will  
of



and which in the issue will certainly procure it, unless remedies be applied, or nature itself makes some extraordinary efforts. (8)

4. This consideration leads us to a fourth, which condemns the foolish illusion of the greatest part of mankind, who imagine, they can join together uncleanness and holiness. On the one hand, they say, they can indulge their passions and sensual pleasures, if on the other they do some good works. They even pretend, that with the one they compensate for the other, and that their alms, their prayers, their fastings, and such exercises are of so much value before God, that on account of them he will take no notice of their sins.

The

of a *king*, that the bishop should pay him a dividend; and it is the will of a *pope*, that princes should grant him a share. It is the will and pleasure of us *all* to call this THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST. S. Paul had a quite contrary idea of religion, when he reprov'd *will-worship*. Col. ii. 18—23.

(8) *Nothing is more opposite to the divine calling than sin.* There is no extravagance, into which some theologians have not run. It has been affirmed, sin does a believer no harm. It lies on those, who say so, to prove their assertion. Sin hurts the body—the property—the character—the comfort—the soul of a good man, as good men daily find by woful experience. One, who is supposed to carry his notions of grace

farther than most modern divines, has well observed—“that assurance of hope is founded on *experience* of the love of God—that no man, by enjoying the holy spirit as a comforter, can find any ground for being less afraid of sinning, or of its consequences, than he was before—that, when S. Paul was in distress, he heard nothing from Jesus Christ to relieve him but these words, *my grace is sufficient for thee*, &c.—that, when S. John was terrified in the isle of Patmos, Jesus Christ encouraged him, by reminding him of the same truth, which encourages the worst of mankind, when they first understand it, *Fear not, I am the first and the last*, &c.” This writer, therefore, ought not to be taxed with introducing libertinism. Sande-

man's

The apostle strikes here at this vain and pernicious opinion, when, on the one hand, he says, without restriction or limitation, *God hath not called us to uncleanness*, and on the other opposes sanctification against uncleanness, as two things which destroy each other, and which can never be associated together. The one is the state from which effectual calling takes us, the other is that to which it conducts us; the one is the kingdom of *darkness* whence the divine voice calls us, the other is the kingdom of *marvellous light* into which it introduces us. (9)

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Nor

*man's Let. on Theron and Aspasio, let. vi. vol. ii.*

Our author's system lies between two dangerous extremes. They, who affirm, sin does not hurt a believer, encourage vice: and they, who affirm, sins committed after regeneration exclude believers from the benefit of redemption, drive the sinner to despair. Mr. Claude's system opposes a powerful barrier against sin by threatening a backslider with the loss of God's comforting presence, the highest of all possible enjoyments; and he at the same time, by representing God as a merciful father, guards against desperation, and provides for the sinner's return to his *first love*. See Hof. ii. 7.

(9) *God hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* 1 Pet. ii. 9. The pagan religion was *total darkness*,

the Jewish *partial light*, or comparative darkness: from both the divine calling brought men into the *perfect light* of the gospel, a light truly marvellous! A Roman commentator supposes S. Peter to take his ideas in this place from Isai. lx. 2. *Darkness shall cover the earth: but the Lord shall rise upon thee.* xliii. 21. *This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise.* Psal. xxii. 22.—cii. 18. “Hoc B. Petrus desumpsit a prophetis. Hoc olim per densas Egyptiorum tenebras adumbratum fuit: quandoquidem Israelitæ clarissimo lumine gauderent, infidelibus in plusquam cimneriis tenebris degentibus.” An assortment of new testament texts with old testament passages tends very much to elucidate both. *Feu ardentius in loc.*

Nor are we to hope for any compensation on our part towards God. A thousand good works cannot expiate the guilt of the least sin, and one single sin would be more likely to destroy a thousand good works, than a thousand good works would be to suspend the punishment of one single sin. You will ask, then, How are the sins, which we commit after calling, to be pardoned? I answer, If we could fully discharge our duty, we should commit none at all, because every sin is contrary to our vocation, and all produce bad effects in us : but as it is impossible for us in this life to attain this perfect sanctification, to which God calls us, there is only one way of having the sins pardoned, into which we fall, and this way is not by pretending to compound with God, by placing our sins on this side, and our duties on that ; but only by an application by a lively faith to the blood of Jesus Christ, and to the mercy of God the father, and at the same time leaving off the course of our sins, and by mortifying them in ourselves by a sincere repentance. Sin, which has two lives, one in God, and the other in us, one in the remembrance and wrath of God, and the other in the love, which we have for it, cannot die in God, (if I may be allowed so to express myself.) that is, cannot be pardoned by his justice, till first it dies in us ; till we renounce that unjust approbation, which we have had for it, and feel a hatred against it. (1)

5. More-

(1) *We can make no compensation to God.* To compensate, strictly speaking, is to make amends for depriving a person of one right by performing some other. The doctrine of compensation, therefore, is the doctrine of substitution. Now what can we substitute of equal value in the place of moral rectitude? External privileges of birth, education, fortune, &c. a zealous profession of religion ; a strict observance of religious rites ; just speculative



5. Moreover, you may remark here upon the term *called*, which scripture so often uses, and which our apostle employs in this verse, that a Christian society is not a fortuitous or tumultuous assembly, which hazard or human caprice has formed; nor is it a mere human assembly, which the simple light of reason, instinct of nature, or the authority of magistrates has convened: but it is a divine assembly, gathered by the order and authority of the supreme monarch of all mankind. It is an assembly, of which he himself is the founder and author; either as it is formed according to his eternal counsels, or as he has been pleased to appoint its laws, offices, and rules, or in fine as he has laid the inviolable foundations upon which it is established. It is formed by the power of his voice, or his word, and by the infusion of the holy spirit; for to these principles only can the forming of christian assemblies be referred.

S. Paul admirably expresses this in his epistle to the Romans, *whom he did foreknow* (says he) *he*  
also

culative opinions; good resolutions; extreme sufferings; all these, with whatever else can be imagined of the kind, have their value: but they cannot weigh against personal holiness. This made Herbert say,

All Solomon's sea of brass and world of stone  
Is not to be compar'd with one good groan. *Temple.*

In our author's system, man is considered in *two* points of light. In the first he is a criminal before his judge, pardoned, and accepted for the sake of a compensation, which Christ in his one person, as the sinners substitute, produceth. This is justification. In the second he is a son, and nothing can be substituted in the place of love and obedience to his father. In this latter sense Mr. Claude reprobates compensation.

*Some pretend to compound with God. Composition differs*  
O o

also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. This is to teach us that this society, in its commencement, progress and end is all of God. This truth is not only a very just and beautiful notion: but it is more, it is a very weighty, important, and necessary doctrine. (2)

1. It

fers from compensation. The latter puts *something else* in the place of moral rectitude: but the former gives only a *less degree* of rectitude; it gives a penny the value of a pound, makes one good work go for two, and acquires by the imperfect obedience of five years all that is due to a whole life of unspotted purity. These, we presume, are two of the *ways*, in which, S. Paul says, *are destruction and misery*. Rom. iii. 16. Yet these are the *ways of pagan darkness*, for the sake of walking in which we *leave the paths of uprightness*. Prov. i. 13.

(2) *The convening of the church by the authority of God is an important doctrine.* Our author assigns his reasons, and there are, we think,

the three following to be added. 1. This is a point laboured in the holy scriptures. God is every where made the origin of all religion. 2. This idea agrees with all the rest of the plan of redemption; the opposite notion is incongruous with it. 3. This has always produced, and must always continue to produce the noblest moral effects. This state of things is true of individuals, as well as of the church in a collective body. Each may truly say, *By grace I am what I am*. 1 Cor. xv. 10.

This doctrine is taught in the epistle of James i. 17. in hexameter verse. The first line is perfect; the next becomes so by a small transposition.

Πασα δοσις ἀγαθὴ, καὶ παν δῶρημα τελειον,  
Ἴς ἀπο τῶν ὧν πατὴρ καταβαίνει ἀνῶθεν.

Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, &c. There was in

the primitive church, among other extraordinary gifts, that of *psalmody*, 1 Cor. xiv. 26. and it is not improbable, that

1. It obliges us to acknowledge that all we are, and all we have, is of God, we hold all of him, and owe him an entire devotedness.

2. It condemns that absolute and supreme dominion, which men would exercise over the church. Were our calling into this assembly natural and human, I would consent with all my heart that men should have the authority, and establish an empire as absolute as they could: but as the church is a divine society, which God only has convened, none but himself can have a right to the supreme government of it. This made S. Paul himself, as great an apostle as he was, protest he had *no dominion over the faith* (3) of Christians. He could not bear to have it said by one, *I am of Paul*; and  
by

that these are two of the lines, which were then sung in the church, and which, being quoted by S. James, are preserved to this day, a monument of what truths the brethren taught one another in *psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs*. Col. iii. 16.

(3) S. Paul protested, he had no dominion over faith. 2 Cor. i. 24. ΟΥΚ ΕΙΠΕΝ, υμων, ΑΛΛΑ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ, inquit Chrysostomus in locum.

Dominion over faith is the most absurd and impious claim, that was ever set up by bad men: absurd, because it can never be obtained; and impious, because it subverts that very principle, on which all religion is founded. This is the true reason of our dissent from the episcopal church in

this kingdom. Episcopalians always pretend, that we dissent for trifles, and do so through petulance, caprice, faction, obstinacy, and what not: but, when THE CHIEF SHEPHERD shall appear, and judge between cattle and cattle, these shepherds of Israel shall know, that we dissented, because with force and with cruelty they RULED us. Seemeth it a small thing to them to have eaten up the good pasture: but they must tread down the residue with their feet; and to have drunk of the deep waters: but they must foul the residue with their feet? God hath set up ONE shepherd over us; he is our God, and Christ the prince among us. See Ezek. xxxiv. 17—2—4—18—23—24.



by another, *I of Cephas*; and by a third, *I of Apollos*. S. Peter in like manner speaking to the pastors or elders, and injoining them to feed the flock of Jesus Christ, absolutely forbids their pretensions to mastership, *not* (says he) *as being lords over God's heritage*. (4)

### 3. This

(4) *Cleris. i. e. gregibus.* Olim populus Israeliticus dicebatur κληρος, five patrimonium, et hæreditas dei; nunc populus christianus, et cætus fidelium ex Judæis, et gentibus conflatus.

ΚΑΝΩΝ δὲ ἐκκλησιαστικός ἡ συνάδια καὶ ἡ συμφωνία νόμου, τε καὶ προφητῶν, τῇ κατὰ τὴν τῆς κυρίου παρουσίαν παραδιδόμενη διαθήκη. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 6.

*Not lording it over God's heritage, God's clergy.* Popish commentators, and their followers, who plead for priestly dominion over conscience, are miserably perplexed with this passage. Here the *people* are called clergy, and their ministers are *forbidden* to play Jupiter among them. In the papal system, the *priests* are clergy, and they are commanded to *rule* the people. When Joshua divided the holy land by lot among the Israelites, it pleased God to provide for a thirteenth part of them, called Levites, by assigning them a personal estate equivalent to that provision made by real estate, which was allotted to each of the other twelve parts. In

conformity to the style of the transaction, the Levites were called God's *lot, inheritance, or clergy*. This style, however, is not always used by the old testament writers. Sometimes they call *all* the nation God's lot. *Jacob is the lot of Jehovah's inheritance.* Deut. xxxii. 9. David fed Israel, *God's inheritance.* Psal. lxxviii. 71—xxviii. 9. &c. The new testament writers adopt this style, and apply it to the *whole* christian church. S. Peter says, *ye, believers, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood.* 1. ii. 9. And here again he calls the whole church *God's heritage*. It is the church as distinguished from the *world*, and not one part of the church as distinguished from another part. By what strange art then do priests call themselves *clergy*, and some of them *the clergy*, and denominate others *laity* (from λαος the people) or by what artifice do they assume dominion over their brethren, call themselves *lords*, and pretend to conciliate the whole with a passage of holy writ, which expressly forbids  
bo

3. This consideration is also a motive to holiness; for as it is God himself who has called us, as he has honoured us by making us a part of the mystical body of his son, as we live under his divine laws, and under his inspection, what purity ought to prevail in all our conduct!

4. This

both the dominion, and the distinction? Among the multitude of absurdities exhibited by divines, who have written concerning *the clergy*, by which they always mean themselves, there are three, that challenge a particular attention. 1. They pretend a *divine right*, and yet God knows, and the whole world know, historians have developed the whole subject, and have put it in the power of a child to prove to a demonstration, that at best they are only of *human* appointment. 2. The powers, that create them, create them on condition of their renouncing all authority in matters of faith; and oblige them actually to stipulate, that they will believe all the creed of their creators great grandfathers, and no other; and yet these very men pretend to *authority*. Thus *Hooker*, "We hold that God's clergy are a state which hath been, and will be as long as there is a church upon earth, necessary by the plain word of God himself; a state whereunto the rest of God's people must be *subject*, as touching things that ap-

pertain to their soul's health." Is it not pleasant to hear these slaves talk of ruling? 3. These very men, who hold the main article of popery, pretend to write *Confutations* of popery. Thus did Dr. Bennet: but let any man read the same Doctor's dreams in his *essay on the 39 articles*, and judge whether papists have any thing to fear from such divines as he. The church of Rome is the only consistent church on these articles. Clerical authority there pleads for itself with a good grace: but we, we who allow ourselves valid clergymen only on account of a commission derived from a prince, what have we to do to dethrone the *pope*, to boast of *ruling*, and to talk of *divine* appointment! Formerly, some divines were so rash as to sport with majesty, and to enquire whether the king or queen of Great Britain, the head of *the church* for the time, were clergyman or layman? Modern divines omit this dangerous question, and we commend their prudence. If Q. Ann were a layman, and  
elected

4. This doctrine of our divine calling furnishes us with abundant matter of consolation in our afflictions, and assurance in our dangers. I say consolation in our afflictions, since we can never suffer any thing distressing enough to make us forget the honour of our calling, nor can any of our afflictions compare with the glory, which is prepared for us. I say also assurance in all our dangers; for, since it is God himself, who has called us, he himself will also support us. When he made the world of nature he joined the title of preserver to that of creator, and he does the same in grace; for this reason the apostle says, *God is faithful, who hath called you to the fellowship of his son*; you see, the apostle infers our protection from our calling; and in that beautiful chain of our salvation, which we have already alledged, he joins calling in an indissoluble bond with justification, and glorification, *whom he called, them he justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* (5)

## 6. Saint

elected bishops and court-chaplains, how dare Dr. Bennet publish a book entitled, "*the rights of the clergy - - shewing that God has given, and appropriated to the clergy, authority to ordain, baptize, preach, preside in church prayers, and conse-*

*crate the Lord's supper. Wherein also the pretended divine right of the LAITY to elect, either the persons to be ordained, or their own particular pastors, is examin'd and DISPROVED?*" If her majesty were a clergyman, might she preach, baptize, &c,

Sed taceam, optimum est, plus scire satius est,  
Quam loqui servum hominem, ea sapientia est.

*Plaut. in Epid.*

(5) *Whom he justified them he glorified.* Magnificissima conclusio totius superioris de justificatione gratuita disputationis. *Beza in Rom. viii. 31.*

All our divines allow, that the epistle to the Romans is a regular system of christian theology. It is natural therefore, to expect some account of predestination. S. Paul

actu-



6. Saint Paul, placing before our eyes the nature of christian calling, tacitly remarks the difference between the works of God, and those of the devil. Almost in every thing the devil presumes to imitate God: but he imitates him in a contrary sense. Has God his mystery, *a mystery of godliness*? the devil has his, *a mystery of iniquity*. Does God cast his seed into the field? the devil will not fail to sow his: but God sows good wheat, Satan tares. God spoke to our first parents in paradise, and Satan also would speak to them: but God spoke to make them happy, Satan to render them miserable. To come nearer to our subject, God has formed his society, he has convoked and associated men in one body: the devil also has collected one, he has his voice and calling, his spirit and power, his laws and empire even as God has his: but with this difference, God calls us *not to uncleanness, but to holiness*; the devil calls us *not to holiness, but to uncleanness*; the one conducts men from dark-  
ness

actually introduces the word, and treats of the subject, and this verse seems to be, what Beza calls it, the conclusion of his doctrine of justification, and the introduction to that of predestination. Arminian divines get rid of this article by curious criticisms on single terms, and by pretended elucidations, which seem not to have fallen under the apostle's notice. Some have said, "S. Paul puts these verbs *in aoristo*, and an aorist, say they, is sometimes put for a future, and thus a genuine construction of the words refutes the predestina-

rian explication." We plead the scope of the place against such conclusions as are drawn from grammaticisms. Nothing is more frequent among verbal criticks than affirming—this place may mean so and so—this word may be taken in this or that sense—this phrase is vague, and has several meanings—and so on: but in argumentation it is not sufficient to affirm, the word *may* be understood thus, it must be proved, that it *must* be understood thus, and cannot, consistently with the scope of the writer, mean otherwise.  
Thus

ness to light, from sin to holiness, from filthiness to purity: the other precipitates them from light to darkness, and from innocence to corruption, and sin. (6)

## 7. Before

Thus an excellent critick.  
 “Nihil frequentius - - quam  
 allatis argumentis ita respon-  
 dere: *potest hic locus ita ac-  
 cipi; potest hæc vox aliter in-  
 telligi; at hoc pro probatione  
 tropi nequaquam sufficit.*  
 Demonstrandum enim ex ipsa  
 textus evidentia, non solum  
 posse aliter intelligi: sed et  
 non debere aliter intelligi, &c.  
*Glassii Philol. Sac. L. ii. p. 1.*  
*Tract. 2. Sect. 1. Can. iv.*

(6) Satan imitates God.  
 This idea is common, and  
 seems to be well-grounded.  
 S. Paul's words are well  
 known. Satan himself is  
 transformed into an angel of  
 light—His ministers also are  
 transformed as the ministers  
 of righteousness—False apostles  
 transform themselves into the

*apostles of Christ.—I fear, lest  
 by any means, as the serpent  
 beguiled Eve, through his sub-  
 tility; so your minds should be  
 corrupted from the simplicity  
 that is in Christ. 2 Cor. xi.*  
 14, 15, 13, 3.

The apostle also makes the  
 contrast. God, who commanded  
 the light to shine out of dark-  
 ness, hath shined in our hearts,  
 to give the light of the know-  
 ledge of the glory of God, in  
 the face of Jesus Christ—The  
 God of this world hath blinded  
 the minds of them which be-  
 lieve not, lest the light of the  
 glorious gospel of Christ should  
 shine unto them. 2 Cor. iv.  
 6, 4.

To this we ascribe,

## 1. Hypocrisy:

Satan - - - was the first  
 That practis'd falshood under faintly show,  
 Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge.

*Milton Par. Lost. B. iv. 12.*

- - - - -

For neither man nor angel can discern  
 Hypocrisy, the only ill that walks  
 Invisible, except to God alone,  
 By his permissive will through heav'n and earth;  
 And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps  
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity  
 Regins her charge, while wisdom thinks no ill,  
 Where no ill seems.

*B. iii. l. 683.*

## 2. The

7. Before I quit this part I cannot deny myself the liberty of giving a most certain rule for distinguishing the false religion from the true. I will not say, false religions are those, which openly solicit to sin; for what religion can you find in the world, which does not profess to forbid vice, and command virtue? but I affirm, since all false religions are the productions of the devil, and since his great and ardent design is to preserve and propagate sin amongst men, it is impossible, there should be a false religion in the world, which does not by covert and indirect ways labour to ruin true holiness, and to continue men in sin. Were it otherwise, it would be certain, the devil had forgot the art, which he has practised from the beginning of the world.

Allow me to shew you this peaceably without offending any of you. Consider, I beseech you, that religion, which under the fair pretence of mortifications, fasts, penitential habits, and other such austerities, fills the minds of men with pride and presumption under pretence of merit, meta-  
mor-

2. The various *religions* in the pagan world. There were temples—oracles—sacrifices—priests—prophecies—miracles, &c.

3. The several *corruptions* of revealed religion. The true christian church has Christ for its head—scripture for its law—ministers for officers, &c.—The papal church has a pope for its head—traditions for laws—priests for officers—twelve cardinal priests in imitation of twelve apostles—cardinal

deacons in imitation of the seventy disciples, &c. The whole of popery is a devilish imitation of a godlike œconomy: but the former tends all to mischief and misery, while the latter is productive of nothing but holiness and felicity. Rome calls to slavery; God to liberty—Rome to bigotry; God to benevolence—Rome to superstition; God to rational piety—the one to *uncleanneſs*; the other to *holineſs*.



morphosing men into proud Pharisees, and teaching each to say, *I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all I possess, I am not as other men, not as that publican.* (7)

Consider that religion, which under the admirable vail of good works, and acts of devotion, makes the greatest part of piety consist in actions altogether superstitious, vain, and ridiculous: committing the two evils, with which God formerly reproached the Jews, *forsaking the fountain of living waters, and hewing out to themselves broken cisterns, which can hold none.* Is not the religion we speak of guilty of this? almost all its devotion stands in the choice of foods, in the celebration of feasts, in pilgrimages, in touching and venerating relicks,  
in

(7) *Consider that religion, which cherishes pride.* Mr. Claude means *popery*, a religion (if it be not profane to call such a farrago religion) calculated to gratify the most boundless ambition. The power and pomp, and riches of the priesthood: the magnificence of temples, statues, pictures, vestments, processions, and installations; the veneration paid to dreamers, visionaries, and enthusiasts; the doctrines of supremacy, infallibility, supererogation, and merit; the splendid ceremonies and duties of popery, all are calculated to satiate human ambition; and accordingly this church hath produced the proudest mortals, that ever the sun beheld. Cæsar, and Alexan-

ders are novices to Popes; the latter have claimed more subjects, a larger revenue, and a greater extent of jurisdiction than the former ever thought of. Our laborious historian, John Fox, closeth the first volume of his acts and monuments with what he calls *the image of antichrist exalting HIMSELF in the temple of God*, that is, a narration of the powers claimed by the pope extracted out of pontifical decrees, extravagants, &c. It is a very curious composition: but too long to insert here. It concludes, "the whole world is my diocese - - - and it standeth upon necessity of salvation for every human creature to be subject to ME."

in telling beads, in visiting tombs, and in other things of the same kind. (8)

Consider that religion, which under pretence of humility and godly fear forbids men ever to be assured of their salvation, and commands them to remain always ignorant or uncertain of participating the favour of God when they die. Is not this entirely to reverse sanctification, and to destroy its true principle? for the principle of true holiness, or, to speak more properly, the essence and soul of holiness, what is it? is it not that filial love, which we have for God? but how can that love subsist with a perpetual uncertainty? how stand with perpetual doubts whether God be a friend or an enemy, whether he resolve to save or to destroy us? and with these cruel perplexities, which accompany this uncertainty, whatever good I do, whatever righteousness I am enabled to do, however abundant the measures of grace, which God communicates to me, I cannot assure myself either of my election or perseverance, and must believe, perhaps God has rejected me, and will eternally destroy me. I must suppose that, notwithstanding all the grace, which he has hitherto bestowed upon me, notwithstanding the remission of my sins which he has granted me, notwithstanding his bringing me into communion with Jesus Christ, notwithstanding his giving me his holy spirit, yet  
all

(3) *Consider that religion, which places piety in superstition.* It is somewhat remarkable, that, in the index to the best edition of the council of Trent, the allowed authentick system of modern popery, we do not once meet with the word PIETY, so

that we know not what the church places it in. What a body of divinity! The POPE (Pontifex) indeed is there, and above forty references under it. So very intent is papal zeal on establishing popery, that it forgets even to mention piety!

all this does not hinder that he may hate me in his heart, and perhaps may have hated me eternally. Tell me, pray, is this to represent God as an amiable being? is not this overturning holiness instead of establishing it? (9)

Let us pass now to the second part of our text; it consists in the assurance, which the apostle gives that the doctrine he proposes is inviolable, and entirely divine. *He therefore (adds he) that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy spirit.*

You must observe, first, that we must not think, that by this rejection of the doctrine, the apostle means simply such an open and declared rejection as infidels make, such an one as Jews and Pagans make, who openly blaspheme the gospel. It is not likely S. Paul addressed himself here to people,

(9) *Consider that religion, which forbids assurance, under pretence of humility.* We have mentioned this subject before. See vol. i. 258, 259. The church of Rome, by inculcating the doctrine of human merit, destroys assurance, as many of our old divines have fully shewn. The pretence of humility deserves to be exploded; for the finest notion we can form of one christian grace is to consider it as in perfect harmony with all other christian graces. True faith is always humble; and genuine humility is in perfect harmony with faith. Half the religion of some good people among protestants consists of doubting and complaining, and

under pretence of humility too: but their folly should not be charged on the constitution of things among us. Papists have uncertain grounds of acting and believing, as traditions, ecclesiastical archives, papal infallibility, and so on: but protestants lay the sure word of God as ground of faith. Papists are required to yield implicit faith in the unexamined opinions of others: but protestants are required to see with their own eyes, to believe on their own evidence. The parallel might be run a great way: but these hints are sufficient to shew which community constitutionally produces faith, and which generates fear.



people, who did not at all acknowledge christianity; he speaks to christians, who were called already to the profession of christianity in the church, and who externally embraced the religion of Jesus Christ. It is less likely still, that, among the professors of christianity, there should be any found in the apostles times, who boldly and openly denied the necessity of sanctification and good works. There were indeed afterward certain hereticks called Gnostics to whom they impute horrible maxims upon this subject; but, besides that it is very doubtful whether these people held all the maxims charged upon them, besides this, I say, I do not think the sect was sprung up when S. Paul wrote this epistle to the Thessalonians, or if it were in embryo, it was not yet formed completely, nor publicly known. (1)

I am

(1) *Gnostics*. Other heresies in the primitive church had their names from their authors, as Marcionites, Carpocratians, Valentinians, &c. but *Gnostic* seems to be common to them all, and if we may judge by the word, a Gnostic was one who placed his religion in speculation only; a man might therefore be a Gnostic not only by believing errors, but even by mistaking the end of evangelical truths, which are revealed not barely to gratify speculation, but to direct practice. I suppose it is difficult to say at what time this spirit first wrought in the churches, but it is certain, the epistle of James is directed

against it, the whole design of that apostle being to shew the uselessness of believing even truth itself, without a corresponding conduct. Hence Lactantius says, "Omnis sapientia hominis in hoc uno est ut Deum cognoscat, ET COLAT. Hoc nostrum dogma hæc sententia est. Quanta itaque voce possum testificor, proclamo, denuncio, &c." *Lact. div. inst. lib. iii. cap. 30.*

It is doubtful, whether the *Gnostics* were known in S. Paul's time. Mr. Claude follows Clement of Alexandria, who affirms, that the Gnostic sect first rose under the emperor Adrian. It should seem from 1 John ii.

I am therefore persuaded, S. Paul speaks here of another kind of contempt, *he that despiseth* is he, who *practically* despiseth, who professing to be a christian yet remains immerfed in fin, and not in any way devoting himself to holiness. The apostle speaks against such despisers as these, and of these he says, they *despise not man but God.* (2)

There

18.—1 Tim. vi. 20.—Col. xi. 8.—that the Gnostic heresy did spring up in the days of the apostles: but, it is certain, it was not very conspicuous till Adrian's time.

*It is doubtful whether the Gnostics held all the doctrines usually imputed to them.* This amiable spirit of equity deserves to be imitated, especially in an investigation of primitive errors. No part of church history needs more elucidation. All, who disputed with the prevailing party, and dissented from them, were reputed hereticks; and their tale was told by their opponents. We know by experience how domineering parties tell the tales of the oppressed. Few take pains to understand pretended hereticks, and fewer still have the courage to do them justice. It is almost impossible to believe, that these people held such notions of the first cause—the holy scriptures—Jesus Christ—and morality—as are imputed to them.

Priscillian, bishop of

Abila, is said to have revived the old Gnostic doctrine in Spain in the fourth century. Ithacius, bishop of Sossuba, procured first from the emperor Gratian his banishment, and afterward from the emperor Maximus his death. This Ithacius was the first person who introduced *civil* persecution into the church. Sulpicius Severus gives the bloody wretch this character. "He was a man abandoned to the most corrupt indolence, and without the least tincture of true piety. He was audacious, talkative, impudent, luxurious, and a slave to his belly. He accused as *hereticks*, and as protectors of Priscillian, all those, whose lives were consecrated to the pursuit of piety and knowledge, or distinguished by acts of mortification and abstinence." What credit is due to what such men say of heresy and hereticks! See *Mosheim, cent. iv. p. 2. note.*

(2) *Despiseth God.* Sin is a practical contempt of God. They rebelled against the words

There is a great deal of reason to think, the apostle speaks of such, for, it is certain, these are the most cruel enemies of religion, and the most odious kind of men, that can be imagined in a church. They are odious, for to all the other vices, with which they are infected, they join hypocrisy; they have the voice of Jacob and the hands of Esau; *whited sepulchres*, under fair out-faces concealing rottenness and putrefaction. They, who are openly profane, are not, however, such deceivers as these, they do not deceive us, they impose upon nobody: but these are impostors, (3) who

words of God, and *contemned* the counsel of the most high. Psal. cvii. 11.—Wherefore doth the *wicked* condemn God? Psal. x. 13.—Hence the exhortation of S. Paul, *Despise not prophesyings*. 1 Thess. v. 20. Our Lord explains and reproves this disposition. Mat. xxii. 5. A certain king sent his servants - - - to say - - - come unto the marriage - - - but they *made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize*. “*The seat of scorners*, says Dr. Manton, is the highest degree of sin.” Psal. i. 1.

(3) *Impostors*. Such were, in the primitive church, the false apostles, whom S. Paul treats with so much just abhorrence. 2 Cor. ii. 17. *We are not as many who corrupt the word of God, κατασκευαζοντες*, manufacturing the word of God, dealing deceitfully

with it, lowering its value by mixing it with pagan philosophy, or Jewish traditions. —iv. 2. *We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully. We speak as of sincerity, as of God, &c.* Sincerity, or purity is twofold, first in the *doctrine* delivered, called *the sincere*, that is the pure milk of the word, unmixed with human conjectures and traditions. 1 Pet. ii. 2. Secondly, in the preacher, whose intentions are pure and his actions upright. In both these the false apostles of old were defective; and modern hypocrites exactly resemble them. Salvian contrasts these prettily, “Non potest dici de gentibus, evangelia legunt, et impudici sunt—apostolos audiunt, et inebriantur—Christum sequuntur et rapi-

unt—



who hide the horror of their crimes under a fair exterior; false prophets, who say *Lord, Lord*, and who yet remain *workers of iniquity*, and what in the world can be so odious as this? These are the most cruel enemies of the church and of religion, these do us a hundred times more harm than the most open, declared, persecuting enemies can do, however proud and vindictive the latter may be.

Declared enemies calumniate religion; but they are not believed, and religion sufficiently defends itself

unt—vitam improbam agunt, et probam legem se habere dicunt.” &c. &c. *Lib. iv.*

*Whited Sepulchres.* Mat. xxiii. 27. Our Lord alludes to the popular custom of covering common graves with lime or chalk, or with a whited board, rail, or stone, which was done annually, when the roads were repaired, on the first of Adar, in our February. The general intention was to prevent travellers contracting a ceremonial uncleanness by touching the dead. The whiteness warned them to avoid the place. The Pharisees, affecting superior piety, *built tombs for the prophets, and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous.* Verses 29, 30. Some graves, either through poverty, neglect, or heavy rains washing off the thin whitening, *appeared not, and men, that walked over them, were not aware of them.* Luke xi. 44. To these three sorts of graves our Lord likens the pharisees, that is to say, he

considered their hypocrisy in three different points of light. Their exterior *concealed* their odious inward dispositions—It made a great *show* in the eyes of mankind—and it *deceived* the unwary into a dangerous admiration and imitation of them.

Hypocrisy is well characterized by its affected veneration for virtuous predecessors. Dion says, the emperor Caracalla, one of the worst of men, hated good men as long as they lived, and honoured them after they were dead. Herod, who murdered Aristobulus for his virtues, paid him the highest funeral honours after his death. Thus the Jews dealt with the prophets, and thus modern hypocrites erect statues of the apostles, procure fine pictures of Jesus Christ, and his renowned disciples, and cherish, like the old pharisees, the same bloody dispositions, that brought them all to the grave. Ah! could your statues speak! - - -

itself against their accusations; but these are commonly believed, when they dishonour christian piety. Why (say people) should we not believe them? these are friends and not enemies, their designs are evident, it is a spirit of religion, which animates them. Persecutors only trouble the outward state of the church, and frequently while they disturb its outward repose, they contribute (in spite of their designs.) to augment its faith and holiness: but these wicked hypocrites, of whom we speak, attack the very vitals of religion, and by their contagious and bad examples surprize the simple, and defile their piety. But why do I speak of the simple? the strongest christians, even those, who are farthest advanced in the practice of piety, cannot secure themselves against their poison; for what can be more dangerous than a bad example, which insinuates under the veil of brotherhood and friendship? *A little leaven* (says the apostle.) *leaveneth the whole lump.* A vicious conversation is a pestilent disease in the church, or, if you will, it is a spark of fire in a stack of straw. Alas! we are all, great and little, strong and weak, too much like combustible matter, we have all of us too much inclination to sin, when we are tempted on any side, and how much more liable are we to fall into it when assaulted from a quarter, of which we were not aware, and consequently for which we were not prepared? (4)

2. But

(4) *Hypocrites.* Our divine master had such an abhorrence of hypocrisy, that he not only commanded his followers not to *be* hypocrites, but not to be *like* them. Christus discipulis suis in

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mandatis dedit, ne essent *ὡς περ οἱ υποκριταὶ* quasi vel tanquam hypocritæ; aliud erat hypocritas esse, aliud *tanquam* hypocritas, *voluit autem ne hypocritis quidem similes fieri.* Bayleus in conci-

Qq

ene

2. But you will ask me, Are all those hypocrites, who sin in the church? Are there no true believers, who sometimes backslide from holiness, and who consequently offend some of the brethren, and give bad examples to all? Alas! too many true believers fall into sin; and, I doubt not, S. Paul had these in view, and addressed these words to them as well as to hypocrites, comprehending both in the number of despisers of this doctrine. I grant, when a believer falls into some sin, it does not follow from thence that he has absolutely rejected the doctrine of sanctification. God forbid we should think so! he falls through infirmity, for our regeneration is never so entire  
as

*one latina, apud Leigh. in Crit. sac.*

Mat. vi. 2. *When thou doest thine ALMS, do not - - as the hypocrites do.*—5. *When thou PRAYEST, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are.*—16. *When ye FAST, be not as the hypocrites.*—8. *Be not ye therefore LIKE unto them.* As if the Lord had said, Do not affect to perform your religious exercises as these men perform the same exercises. Do not, under any specious pretences, imitate them. This is advice of great importance, and deserves more attention than hath usually been paid to it.

Five minutes attention to the doctrine of *imitation* opens a wide field of speculation, and were we to discuss the subject, we should fill a volume. Notes are only hints,

and a hint shall serve here. Observe this train.

The pope attempts to convert the Chinese. The Chinese refuse to accede to the papal terms, unless some concessions be made in favour of their old religion. The pontiff sends missionaries properly instructed, and authorizes them to accommodate christianity to the liking of the emperor, and the empire, by imitating the old ceremonies, yea by incorporating them into the religion of Jesus. Clement XI. Cardinal Tournon, Mezzabarba, and the Jesuits seem to me to differ very little, after all their disputes. All make Christ conform to Confucius. This is the constant course of papal propagation of the gospel.

The



as to exclude all remains of weakness in our understandings and affections: and if those, who declaim upon this subject, were better acquainted with human nature, they would not say so peremptorily as they do, that sin could not dwell in the same heart with faith and love, and the other principles of regeneration. To prove this I only adduce the example of S. Peter. Who can believe that, when Jesus Christ said to him, *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*; who, I say, can believe that these words are to be understood only of some bare illuminations of his understanding, without any true piety or love in his heart? Who can believe, that S. Peter in the moment of his fall, when he was carried away with an impetuous fear, suddenly felt all love and piety expire in his heart? Who can think, that all his attachments to his divine master were suddenly dissolved in

The reformers acted on the same principle in regard to the papists, and retained rites, ceremonies, habits, gestures, and so on; they were not hypocrites: but they were *like* them. The episcopal church retains the resemblance still.

Some modern dissenting ministers, possessed with I know not what rage of imitation, and dazzled with the gaiety and popularity of some modern pious conformist ministers, affect to imitate them. Some put on gowns; others set up organs; some compose liturgies, others sing anthems, learn light tunes and theatrical airs, while others intro-

duce gloria patri, repeat the Lord's prayer, affect to preach and pray like them, and, in a word, to conform as far as they can, and farther than they ought. So, I imitate a parish priest—the priest imitates bishop Cranmer—Cranmer the pope—the pope Aaron, Confucius, Zoroaster, or any body that comes in his way. See *Dr. Owen's Sermon, entitled Righteous zeal, from Jer. xv. 19, 20. Let them return to thee: but return not thou unto them.* I admire this saying of Rushworth. "It is possible for an ingenuous man to be of a party; and yet not partial." *Pref. to Coll.*

in so complete and absolute a manner, that there did not remain in the bottom of his heart the least consideration for him? His ready return to Jesus Christ, when Jesus Christ looked at him, accompanied with bitter repenting tears, fully proves, that if his love and piety had suffered an eclipse, they were not however annihilated. In effect, we must judge of the spiritual as of the natural life, both may undergo very great and enervating changes without perishing entirely.

We must then, it seems, distinguish an absolute from a partial contempt of the doctrine of holiness. (5) Hypocrites, who under the mask of

(5) *Distinguish an absolute from a partial contempt of sanctification.* There are three principal reasons for this distinction. 1. Hence arises an argument for *christianity* against the pleas of false religions. You object, says Tertullian to the pagans somewhere, you object against us, that we have many unrighteous persons in our community. We allow it: but see how you and we differ. Our unrighteous members are reprov'd, and if incorrigible are expelled: but among you the wicked are cherished, honoured and adored. I forget where this passage is, and, as I quote it from my memory, probably it is not exact. The sentiment, however, is just, and applicable to modern infidelity. 2. This distinction should be made for the sake

of those *pious souls* in our communities, whose ignorance would drive them to despair, after through infirmity they had fallen unwarily into sin, were they not informed of the difference between sins of infirmity and sins of enmity. 3. Christian ministers should inculcate this distinction in regard to *church-discipline*. It happens, sometimes, that there are in christian churches pious persons physically defective. Such are they, who have been disordered in their senses, and who after recovery retain a certain wildness and irregularity in all they do. Such also are they, who are constantly or periodically afflicted with lowness of spirits, or, what is still worse, a too great flow of animal spirits, animating them to take bold strides in their

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of external profession conceal a profane heart, and live a profane life, are guilty of the first rejection; and the faithful, when they fall into sin, are guilty of the second: but, be it which it may, it is always true, that every sin which we commit, however small, is a contempt of the doctrine of sanctification; for did we observe it as we ought, we should never sin, as the gospel is not content to demand an imperfect sanctification of us, but on the contrary it exacts a complete and perfect holiness, as well in degrees as in parts, so that always, when we commit any sin, we do in a manner renounce the honour of our calling, and commit an outrage on the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

3. I say on the doctrine of Jesus Christ, that is, on the son of God, even on God himself; for this law of holiness is neither of S. Paul, nor of any other man, but of God and his beloved son: *he that despiseth* (says the apostle) *despiseth not man but God.* He means, that he rejects the authority of God himself, who is the author and publisher of this law. Every sin contains two, one consists in our doing a thing bad in its nature, and contrary to that publick and inviolable order, according to which reasonable creatures ought to act: the other consists in our offending the infinite authority and majesty

deportment. God forbid, we should deny these people the comforts of religion! In order, however, to their enjoyment of them, it is necessary not to exact that uniformity of action in them, which would be essentially requisite, were they physically perfect. Alas! *who can understand his errors!* Let

us not *beat* these fellow-servants. They are objects of pity, and should be borne with in the church as far as possible; for, poor souls! what should they do in the world? Here they are irregular and queer: but there they would be driven raving mad.



majesty of our legislator, and in revolting from the obedience we owe him. S. Paul, having regard to the first, calls sins *uncleannesses* contrary to true holiness: but in regard to the second he calls them *rejections of God*, that is, rebellions against his supreme authority: doubtless a great and enormous crime, and worthy of the most rigorous punishment. (6)

For this reason, (by the way) we reject that frivolous distinction, which the schoolmen in the church of Rome have invented, of *venial sins*. (7)  
It

(6) *Sin is bad in its nature, and it is also an offence against the infinite authority of God, our legislator.* This is a truly christian observation, and this way of stating sin, in order to discover its turpitude, and to destroy its empire, is one noble advantage, which a christian minister possesses above a mere moral philosopher. The philosopher considers sin as a disordering of the established course of things, as heterogeneous and incongruous. The servant of Christ adopts this idea, and adds another, which makes the incongruity appear horrible. He introduces a legislator, reads his law, explains its purity, exhibits revealed motives of obeying it, exposes the folly of resisting God, and so possesses the soul of the sinner with a most wise and cordial aversion to sin, along with a just and affectionate obedience to God. The written law is a set of true words

given from one shepherd, and, in the hand of a wise master of publick assemblies, these words are as goads, and as nails fastened. Eccl. xii. 10, 11.

(7) *Venial sins.* Our author rightly calls this a frivolous distinction of the schools. Thomas Aquinas, and his followers lay down seven idle distinctions between venial and mortal sins. They are not worth repeating. Our divines unanimously reject this distinction. Baxter confutes Aquinas by fourteen arguments, and explains the passages urged by the papists. 1 John v. 16, 17. — James i. 13, 14. The sum seems to be, 1. All sin is mortal, or deserves eternal death in its own nature. 2. All sin is venial, pardonable, remissible, on repentance. Baxt. Meth. Theol. Christ. par. i. cap. 15. Qu. An dentur peccata sua natura venalia?

The

It is most certain, that the smallest sins, which can be committed, contain in them that rebellion, of which we speak, since, however small the offences may seem considered in themselves, they are always violations of the law of the ineffable majesty of God, who forbids them; and this violation, in what manner soever you consider it, must needs deserve death. What can appear smaller considered in itself than the sin of our first parents? Eating a fruit agreeable to the eyes and taste, and seemingly designed by nature only for the nourishment of animal life, was that such a mighty thing? But whatever the action was, considered in itself, it was *forbidden*, nor could our first parents do it without opposing the infinite majesty of their creator, who had said to them *you shall not eat it*: they could not do this without refusing that obedience, which they owed to God, nor consequently without falling into that which constitutes the essence of the greatest of all crimes. (8)

## How

The following reflections of a Romish divine are to the purpose. "I will endeavour to avoid venial sin—because, how venial soever I imagine it, it offends God.—Because how venial soever I suppose it, there is no imaginable reason for allowing it—because I can never enter heaven with it—my venial sins are extremely numerous—they are attended with dreadful consequences.—The remedy, O my God! is an attachment not only to thy law: but to *all the perfection of*

thy law." *Bourdaloue Serm. tom. xv. retraite, second jour.*

(8) *Adam could not eat without falling into what constitutes the essence of the greatest crimes.* "In hac lege Adamo data omnia præcepta condita recognoscimus, quæ postea pullulaverunt data per Moysen, i. e. diliges dominum tuum de toto corde tuo, et ex tota anima tua; et diliges proximum tibi tanquam te, &c." *Tertull. ad Judæos.*

"Quis dubitabit ipsum illud Adæ delictum hæresim pronuntiare, quod per electionem

How needful is it to have this truth continually in view, that we may not deceive ourselves as we too often do ! I do not know how it comes to pass : but when we judge of sins we almost always consider them only as they are in themselves ; and hence in general they appear to us small and trifling, not worthy of our attention, and less still of our repentance, after we have committed them. Is not this a most lamentable self-deception ? We do not remember, that, however inconsiderable our sins may be in themselves, they are always extremely considerable in regard to our supreme legislator, who has forbidden them, for they are nothing less than so many rejections of the blessed God.

#### 4. Re-

tionem suæ potius quam divinæ sententiæ admittit, nisi quod Adam nunquam figulo suo dixit, non prudenter exististi me : confessus est seductionem, non occultavit seductricem : *rudis admodum hæreticus fuit* : non obaudiit : non tamen blasphemavit creatorem, nec reprehendit auctorem, quem a primordio sui bonum et optimum invenerat." *Tertull. adv. Marcion, lib. ii. cap. 2.*

That sin has entered into the world nobody disallows. Alas ! who does not feel irregularities in his own bosom ? That it entered by *one* man, and from him descends to all his posterity, as the scripture teaches, we have all the reason in the world to believe : but how to reconcile this with the divine per-

fections is the question. Take which side of the question you will, believe with some that we bring our propensities to sin into the world with us ; or believe with others, that we catch the contagion here, difficulties there are, and difficulties there will be on either side. The fact is undeniable, I am a sinner, I inquire how I became so ? and how a gracious God could suffer such a misfortune to befall me ? Are my difficulties all solved by proving that not Adam, but a careless tutor, a loose companion, or a bad neighbour corrupted my innocence ? Not in the least, I have as much to say against God in one view as in the other ; nay he, who holds original sin, appears to me the most reasonable



4. Remark here, I intreat you, the conduct of S. Paul. He does not tell the Thessalonians of his own authority; nor does he cloath himself with superb and pompous titles in order to conciliate respect to his person, and veneration for his doctrine; he does not speak to them concerning his rapture to the third heaven, nor of his visions,  
nor

sonable man, for he says, God allowed sin to enter once by one man; but he who denies it tells me, that God does this ten thousand times over every day, and that, though purity is his own image, yet he suffers thousands of innocent creatures to be rifled of it every hour. —I shall be forgiven for interrupting Mr. Claude a few moments longer, while his countryman Saurin gives us a useful word of advice.

“It is a maxim, from which a divine ought never to depart, that, though we know in general what the attributes of God are, yet we are profoundly ignorant in determining their sphere of action. We know in general that God is free, that he is just, and that he is merciful: but we are very ignorant in determining how far these perfections ought to go, because their infinity absorbs our capacity. An example will make this plainer. Suppose two philosophers subsisting before the foundation of the world, and discoursing together upon the plan of

the world, which God was about to create. Suppose the first of these philosophers had maintained this thesis. God will create intelligent beings, he could if he pleased communicate such knowledge to them as would necessarily conduct them to the chief good: but he will give them reason, which by their abuse will conduct them from ignorance to vice, from vice to misery. Moreover, God is about to form a world, where virtue will almost always be in fetters, and vice upon a throne, tyrants crowned, and good people confounded. Suppose the first of our philosophers had maintained this thesis, would not the second have remonstrated against this plan? would he not in all appearance have had reason to maintain, that, God being full of goodness, it was impossible he should create men, whose existence would be their misery; that, being supremely holy, it was not possible he should permit sin to enter into the world? yet, however plausible the reasons of this philosopher might

nor of his miracles, nor of his labours, nor even of the persecutions, which he had suffered for religion, although all these ought to have rendered him very respectable among good people. (9) When it was needful to exalt the grace of God to him, he spoke of his raptures, miracles, and visions; and when it was needful to shew the faithfulness of his conduct in discharging his ministry, against the bold accusations of his enemies, he

have appeared, the event has justified the former. It is certain, God has created this world upon his plan, and it is also certain there is nothing in this world, which clashes with his attributes, whatever pains we are at to answer objections. It is our littleness, they are the narrow limits of our minds, and the immensity of God himself, which prevent our seeing how far the attributes of God can go." *Saur. ser. sur les tourm. de l'enfer. tom ii.*

(9) *S. Paul does not establish his doctrine by praising himself.* How different is this from the conduct of those, who endeavour to lull the present age asleep by singing the praises of the last; who argue thus,—Cranmer was a martyr, therefore the thirty-nine articles must be subscribed—Ridley was a right reverend sufferer at a stake, therefore you must sing te Deum—Bishop Hooper was very humble and very happy in the fire, therefore the book of homilies contains a whole-

some doctrine, and so forth. Vain pretences! As well hum the British ditty, Saint David was a holy man: and a holy man was he - - - And what then? Why - - - Nothing.

S. Jude reproves this practice, ver. 16, 17. *Their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage: but, beloved, remember ye the words, which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

What think we of these arguments? "Some heretics of old, and Anabaptists of late, have looked upon the Canticles only as an ordinary love song, yet the pious in all ages have esteemed it an allegorical dialogue between God and his church." *Dr. Nicholls' Commentary on the articles of the church of Eng. art. vi.*

King Edward's forty-two articles came into the world with this title, "Articles agreed upon by the bishops, and other learned and good men

he recounted his voyages, labours, and persecutions: but when he had a law to impose upon men's consciences, or a doctrine of faith, or a rule of conduct to establish, he introduced it only with the name of *God*. Nothing but what is divine; no consideration at all of man is mentioned here; for faith and conscience acknowledge no authority but

men in the last convocation held at London in the year 1552, &c. Dr. Heylin and Dr. Atterbury affirm that the articles were really drawn up *in convocation*, as the title imports. Dr. Heylin reasons thus, "Had it been otherwise, King Edward, a *most pious and religious* prince, must needs be looked on as a wicked and lewd impostor, in putting such a horrible cheat upon all his subjects, by fathering these articles on the convocation, which begat them not, nor ever gave consent to them." Edward was born October 1538, the articles were drawn up in 1551. Is it imaginable, this *most pious and religious* child of 13 years of age compiled the articles, wrote the title, or had any thing more to do than set his hand to a paper offered him at the council table? Bishop Burnet affirms, the title is a forgery, and brings authentick proof from Cranmer's own confession, that the articles were drawn up by himself and Ridley, and not in convocation. Yet this does not satisfy, the old

argument drawn from the *piety* of the king must be repeated, and strengthened by adding—"to charge such a shuffling trick upon a *pious* prince and his *ministry*, to whom we owe the benefits of *our* reformation, and upon the *most eminent* of the protestant *clergy*, many of which *laid down their lives* for our common religion, is a degree of *incaution* one would not expect from his lordship's *prudence*." But why, good Dr. Nicholls, do you charge Burnet with imprudence and incaution for performing the part of an impartial historian, by detecting the fraud of the title of an old pamphlet of our ancestors? O, replies he, "to expose their imperfections strikes at the truth of *our* religion, and gives occasion to *our* common adversaries to blaspheme." - - Ay! there's the rub! *Nicholls ubi supra*.

*S. Paul* neither spoke of his raptures - - nor of his labours - - nor of his persecutions. He differed then from such preachers as repeat in every sermon their own great



but that of God, nor obey any voice but that of the common master of all creatures. *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants*, says the apostle elsewhere. Herein he resembles the prophets, who, when they advanced any thing, always used this preface, *Thus saith*

doings and sufferings. All may be true, and yet nothing to the purpose. Some very good men offend grossly in this point, under pretence of preaching their own *experience*. We love an experimental preacher, a man who treats of heart-religion, a man who has actually felt the pains and pleasures, of which he speaks to others, a man who, while he preaches, is deeply affected with his subject, and feels what he is saying; we are provoked with a man, who discovers no emotions when he treats of those parts of religion, which interest human passions: but all this will not satisfy some preachers; they must coldly tell us in winter how warm they were last Midsummer; they must inform us when and where they were converted, and on what occasions they were comforted with such and such sweet passages of scripture; how they have backslidden, and how they have been restored; where they found the text, and what suggested their ideas under it, and so on. Whatever motives may

induce these good men to use this method, and by whatever misconstrued passages of scripture they may seem to justify the practice, it is certainly attended with several glaring improprieties. 1. It is a deviation from the commission; preach the *gospel* is the precept: but this is preaching self.—2. It is without precedent, *we preach not ourselves: but Christ Jesus the Lord*. 2 Cor. iv. 5.—3. The minister's experience thus delivered has the air of a *standard* for the people, and so is apt to excite in some contempt, and in others unnecessary fears.—4. It betrays great *imprudence*, not to say *rudeness*. Why should a man wantonly lay himself under the difficult necessity of speaking of himself, of all subjects the hardest in the world for a model man to discuss?—5. It adds no weight to *argument*; for a doctrine is not therefore true, because it hath given the preacher pleasure or pain.—Finally, It excites unnecessary *ridicule* in disaffected hearers, and exposes, not unfrequently, a whole party to contempt.

*saith the Lord.* With this view our apostle, speaking of himself and his associates, says, *we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* (1)

5. But, you will say, the Theſſalonians had received the doctrines of the gospel, and particularly this doctrine of the necessity of holiness from the mouth of man only, methinks, they could therefore

(1) *Conscience acknowledges no authority but that of God.* Mr. Claude treats of this interesting subject at large in his *defence of the reformation*, and establishes the proposition above with his usual ability in three chapters. Chap. vii. is thus entitled, "The authority of the prelates of the latin church ought not to have obliged our ancestors to yield a blind obedience to them, nor to prevent an examination of their doctrine - - - for 1. The word of God expressly forbids all pastoral domination, Luke xxii. 25, 26.—1 Pet. v. 3.—2 Cor. i. 24.—Mat. xxiii. 8, 9, 10.—2. The scripture commands all believers to examine for themselves, Mat. xvii. 6, 12.—1 John iv. 1.—2 Cor. iv. 2—Gal. i. 8, &c.—3. God gave the holy scriptures to all the people, Deut. v. i, &c.—iv. 10.—vi. 6, 7, &c.—Psalm. i. 2.—Rom. i. 7.—John v. 39.—Acts xvii. 11."—The eighth chapter proves "that prelati- cal authority over conscience is the most pernicious maxim in the

world - - for on this ground 1. The Jews would have been right in retaining the traditions of the elders—2. God would have been unjust in punishing the whole nation with captivity in Babylon.—3. The Jews would have done right in rejecting and crucifying Christ.—4. Jesus Christ, his apostles, and disciples would have acted unjustly.—5. The pagans would have done right to reject the gospel.—6. Sometimes Arians would have been right, for in some councils they were in power; and at other times opposite teachers would have been right for the same reason.—God himself frequently waives his authority in proposing truths, and leaves them to examination; so that these two conclusions may be separately and independently drawn. This doctrine is *true*—This doctrine is *divine*, &c." The ninth chapter examines, and refutes all the pretended reasons brought by prelates for the support of their usurped authority, and the author, having

fore only consider it as the doctrine of man, and consequently that, by despising it, they ran no other risque than that of despising a man. S. Paul precludes this objection in the last words of our text. *God (saith he) has also given unto us his holy spirit.* It is almost as if he had said, I own, I brought this gospel to you, but I was not the author of it; I am only a simple instrument, a second cause, for all, that I have preached to you, comes from the Holy Ghost. It was he, who directed my steps toward you, he opened my mouth, and he formed the words, which I have spoken to you. (2)

This

having quoted several passages of scripture in defence of his doctrine, concludes thus, "Were the members of the church of Rome accustomed to read the holy scriptures, they would meet with a thousand proofs of this truth: but most of our controversies originate in their negligence of this divine book, and their negligence of the book proceeds from their excessive confidence in their guides."

(2) *The holy ghost formed the words which I have spoken to you.* The psalmist gives the highest characters of the words of the holy ghost in these propositions.—The law of the Lord is *perfect*.—The testimony of the Lord is *sure*.—The statutes of the Lord are *right*.—The commandment of the Lord is *pure*,—&c. xix. 7, 8, &c. What he elsewhere says of thunder may be truly applied to the

written word. The voice of the Lord is *powerful*, the voice of the Lord is *full of majesty*, xxix. 4. How mismatched are the trite additions of men, when joined to them! They are the squeakings of a puppet affecting to imitate and perpetuate thunder. If there be any case, in which it is unlawful to *add*, or *take away*, (Rev. xxii. 18, 19.) it must needs be in the administration of the two standing ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper. Jesus Christ ordained the first to be administered *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost*, Mat. xxviii. 19. What authority for adding, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign him with the sign of the cross, &c?"

A certain writer objected against the episcopal church, "that



This advances the truth of S. Paul's ministry, and gives a supreme authority to his words; but it no way exalts his person, any more than as an interpreter, whom it had pleased God to choose; now this teaches us,

1. That the apostles said nothing of themselves; but that they were inspired by the holy spirit, who sent them.

2. That they themselves knew they were inspired; for the same spirit, who spoke by them, gave them the knowledge of it, not indeed by sensible characters as he did the prophets, but by the consideration of the majesty and sanctity of their message, and by comparing their preaching with the powers of nature, which was never capable of forming a doctrine so effectual. To this may be added, that S. Paul, who as well as the other apostles having received his mission immediately from Jesus Christ, must rationally conclude, that he, who had constituted him apostle of the gentiles, and had appointed him to so great a work as the conversion of the heathen, had not refused him the extraordinary influence of his grace.

In fine, his own experience must easily convince him that he was animated with the spirit of Jesus Christ in a degree, which rendered his doctrine

“ that in the administration of the communion the priests added words of their own to the words of Christ's institution, as *preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life*. A priest, who undertook the defence of his practice, informed him—that it was a *lovely* practice—that there was no *harm* in it—and that, had not the church provided these words, some men would *use worse*. One used to carry

the cup to each communicant, and, when he delivered it to one, to say—Dare you take this?—to another, Take this, and love Christ's ministers better—to a third, Here, take this, and leave off your lying—to a fourth, Take this, and take heed the devil does not enter into you.” Would not one think, these animals were retained to burlesque religion! *Barbon's Liturgy, a divine service, obj. 35.*

trine infallible, as he had not only not taught any thing foreign from the true gospel of Jesus Christ; but he had been enabled to penetrate all its mysteries in a wonderful manner, as we may see in his epistles. This is the testimony, which himself bears in this epistle, *Our exhortation* (says he) *was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile, but as we were allowed of God, to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth our hearts.* And this was what obliged the faithful to receive the word with an entire obedience, as he says in another place in this epistle, *we thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

6. Finally, you may remark, that the faith of these believers was produced by the conjunction of two spirits, or to speak more properly, by one and the same spirit working in two places; in the *faculty* of the hearer, this we call the *interior* spirit communicated to each believer; and in the *ministration* of the *word*, this we call the *exterior* spirit. From this conjunction arises that approbation or consent, which we give to the mysteries of grace, and that persuasion, which we have of their truth. (3)

If

(3) *The holy spirit works exteriorly in the word, and interiorly in the believer*, that is to say, the holy spirit proposeth truth in the scriptures, and formeth in those, who believe, dispositions to admit it. This doctrine is utterly incompatible with all that ecclesiastical artifice,

which places religion in submission to authority. This deprives us of scripture, the only *rule* of faith, and gives us instead of it a *human* creed: and it renders personal conviction unnecessary. Observe the following monstrous propositions.

“All

If you suppose, that the spirit of God illuminates and animates the faculty of man, and that an object purely human, or one, in which the spirit of God is not, is applied, this conjunction can only produce resistance and rejection, instead of persuasion; because the spirit of God, which is in the faculty, and the spirit of falshood, which is in the ministry, can never unite. For this reason, S. John in his first epistle assures the faithful, that they should not be left to the seductions of false teachers, *for (says he) you have an unction from the holy one*, that is from the spirit of God.

If on the other hand you suppose the spirit of God in the preaching of the word, and in the faculty or understanding of the hearer the spirit of vanity, and the spirit of the world, nothing can be produced by such a conjunction but infidelity and

“ All are obliged to submit to all *unfinsful* conditions of the episcopal communion where they live, if imposed by the ecclesiastical government thereof. There is less security of salvation to be had even on performance of the moral conditions of salvation out of this episcopal communion than in it.

“ This visible church, to whose external communion the ordinary means of salvation are confined, is no other than the episcopal communion of the place where any one lives, whilst he lives there.

“ No other ministers have authority of administering the sacraments but only they who

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receive their orders in the episcopal communion.”

In defence of these absurd propositions, and others like them, Dodwell wrote a quarto book of 627 pages, entitled *The sinfulness and mischief of schism*. We celebrate these men for their *learning*: but, in the name of all that is sacred, can Latin and Greek supply the place of common sense? What avail his fixing the year, in which Athenagoras wrote his apology; the time when Clement of Rome died; the sense of the word Atavus, and so on, while he is robbing God of his honour and men of their liberty?

All writers of this sort do but disguise the fact, and, in

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and rebellion against the gospel; for the reason before-mentioned, because the one spirit being heavenly, and the other earthly, they can never unite with each other; and it is in such a case that S. Paul says to the Corinthians, *if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them, which believe not.*

This may serve for an example of discussing texts by observations; (4) but to these two general ways

comparison with them, Moutague is an ingenuous opponent. He entitles his nostrums *An appeal to Caesar*—drags his adversaries before his *most gracious and dread sovereign* king Charles—gets White, Dean of Carlisle, to write an approbation—“concludes with the viii. CANON, and leaves the execution to *authority*, which he

hopes will not be neglected.” Chap. xxxiv. This is speaking out: the rest is all grimace. Some former learned owner of this learned book has learnedly written in a blank leaf “*Amantissima amici Richardus Montacuti DOCTISSIMA viri.*” Alas! we dare not write Latin against you: but we remember a Roman, who said—

—————Laudare paratus

Si bene rustavit, si rectum minxit amicus.

Juv. Sat. iii.

(4) *Example of discussion.* It is needless to recapitulate our author's observations; in general, we may venture to affirm, they are all pertinent and edifying, and lead up to that one general object, which the text aims to exhibit. A French author of excellent taste remarks another sort of observations, which he, properly enough, arranges under the article CONCETTI. He gives us these following examples from sermons of his country-

men. “John xx. 4. *John did outrun Peter, and came to the sepulchre.* Observe how young persons hasten to the grave, John came to the sepulchre before Peter.—Mat. vi. 27. *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?* You, women, who wear pattens, do you mean to affront Jesus Christ by adding to your stature!—The human heart is triangular, the world is globular, how can the world, then, satisfy the desires of mankind?

ways of discussion, explication, and observation, there may be added two more, which it will be proper sometimes to use: these I proceed to mention, and I shall devote to each a separate chapter.

kind?—In Hebrew the same word signifies both life and death, one point only distinguishes it; alas! there is but a point between the birth and death of men!—Mat. xxvi. 23. *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.* The fall of Judas was a punishment for his incivility to Jesus Christ. This unmannerly servant presumed to dip his hand in the dish with his master!—Our Lord sweated great drops of blood in *all* parts of his body. He was God; God is all eye; he could, therefore, weep and sweat no otherwise.—Jesus was silent before Herod, because the lamb always loses his voice at the sight of the wolf.—He was naked on the cross because he had fallen into the hands of robbers—He eclipsed the sun, and would

have no light at his funeral, in order to discourage the parade of flambeaus at a burial—He lay in a sepulchre of stone to express his abhorrence of luxury—He published his resurrection first to a woman, because, intending to make it as notorious as possible, he knew she could not keep a secret: but, like all her sex, would publish all she knew to the whole world.” How easily might we pattern all these among our countrymen: but we will not. Let France take the glory of these *conceits!* *La Man. de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit. Prem. Dial.*

Observe these words of Tertullian, “*Diabolus tragædos cothurnis extulit, quia nemo potest adjicere cubitum unum ad staturam suam, mendacem facere vult Christum.*” *De Spectac. cap. xxiii.*





## C H A P. VII.

## Of Texts to be discussed in a way of continued Application.

WE have said, there are two general ways of discussing a text, that of explication, and that of observation. These two ways of preaching we call *textuary*, because, in effect, they keep to the text without digression, they regard it as the subject-matter of the whole discussion, or, if you please, as the field, which they have to cultivate, or to reap: but, beside these, there is a third way, which is, without explaining or making observations, the making of a continual application of it, and the reducing of it immediately to practice. (1)

In

(1) *Make a continual application of the text.* The capital art of a preacher is to bring his subject home to the bosoms of his hearers. Divines take different methods of doing this; some apply as they go on, others reserve the application to the last, and close the sermon with it. An eminent professor of divinity in the university of Leyden makes a

just distinction to determine the propriety of each method. “ Applicatio a nonnullis solet subjici singulis partibus explicatis: ab aliis toti textui applicato. Sed hic non est valde laborandum, *quomodo* id fiat, modo id *commode* fiat, Tum enim præstat doctrinas toto textu explicato reservare, quando *partes fere ad eundem scopum spectant*; quia aliqui eadem res repeti videtur. Sed

In this manner we must principally manage texts exhorting to holiness, and repentance, as this  
of

*Sed si partes explicatae sint diversi generis, tum non est inutile, primæ parti explicatae nonnullas doctrinas subjicer, ut tædio auditori occurratur, et major rerum varietas in textu appareat, quæ semper facit auditores attentiores. Interim tamen illas doctrinas convenit ad finem servare, in quibus maximum usus requiritur. Anton. Walæi opera. Methodus formand. Concion. ration. tradens. tom. ii. p. 425.*

When all the parts of a sermon tend to establish one point, then the application should be reserved till the close: but when each part establisheth a different article, then each should be applied, as the preacher goes on.

To give notice, that we are going to apply, is said to be an improper method "The usual method is vicious. The preacher, when he distributes his matter, frequently says, I shall explain the subject—then establish it—and close with an application, or, having discussed his subject, he says, now I come to the application. He should do it without saying he is going to do it; and, to facilitate this part of his work, he should have in readiness various forms of *transition*, and by them pass from explaining and amplifying to applying.

In a moral application some such form of transition as this should be used—Brethren, God not only spoke thus to his people formerly, he speaks thus to us also now—See how he chastised David, he will chastise you also in a like case—Thou art this Abraham, this David, this Jonah—This doctrine is easy to hear: but how hard to practise!—I have been explaining my text: but, believe me, the best comment is a holy life—Think, I beseech you, auditors! might not this be a most useful subject to us?—O that there were as many doers of this command as there are hearers of it!—Examine, sinner! doth not this admonition belong to thee?—Was a subject so important, so comfortable, so terrible, given us merely to speculate, think ye?—How well is this subject fitted to inform the ignorant, to comfort the distressed, to support the weak, to alarm the careless!—Heavenly father; enable us to lay these things to our hearts!—Do ye believe this doctrine, brethren! reduce it to practice then—Without such truths as these, how should we pass through life? or what should we do at death?—Let us bless God, who by his prophet, his apostle,

of Zephaniah, *examine yourselves diligently, O nation not desirable*; for, instead of explaining the terms—or making observations on the necessity of the exhortation—the prophet who spoke it—the Jews to whom

apostle, his son, sent us such information, such encouragement, as this, &c.” Transitions of this kind aptly connect doctrine and use, and preserve all the spirit of an application without the form of it. Many of these were used by Bucholtzer. Vide *Keckerman, Rhet. lib. i. x.*

Pagan orators used concealment as an artifice: but christian ministers may observe, that in this, as in many other cases, artifice originated in nature—that, whatever were the rules, and motives of heathen rhetoricians, it is strictly true, previous information of intention to affect puts auditors on their guard, and frequently precludes the intended effect. Yet, after all, I must confess, the notion of surprizing people into faith and obedience doth not seem to me to comport well with a system of truth and argument. The introduction of application by transition is beautiful because it is natural; and, if pagan rhetoricians make a rule, and an art, and a merit of convincing and persuading an audience without apprizing them that they intend to do so, they make a great noise about  
- - - Nothing.

Some preachers have certainly abused application both in an illiterate and heterodox manner. “Will ye have Jesus Christ? What say ye? Speak now, or for ever after hold your peace! Now or never! See sinners, I offer you the Lord Jesus Christ, will ye accept him? Ah poor Christ! Must he go a begging! Out ye hard-hearted! What will Christ say, when he comes to judge you? I’ll tell you what he’ll do. He will bind you in bundles and burn you. He will say, Here is a bundle of drunkards, and there is a bundle of liars. Take them, Devil! Take them, Devil!” These are bad phrases of the better sort of much worse. I spare the authors, and quote nobody: but every one knows where to find them.

We have divines, who, justly offended with this method, go into the other extreme, and make no application at all. Mr. Hufsey’s book, entitled *God’s operations of grace: but no offers of grace*, is written expressly against applications. “Where doctrines of Christ have been spied out, they have been presently murder’d, or knockt down, by shooting from



whom it is addressed—the description of the nation *not desirable*—the mercy of God in calling these sinners to repentance, &c. the whole may very usefully be turned into practice, and we may enter upon that serious self-examination, which the prophet commands. (2)

The

from the stalking horse of *use and application*. Ah! vile doings among soul-murderers! and text-murderers! who go and let out the life of a text, and kill it upon the spot.” *Glory of Christ. Introduction. S. 31. page 11.*

Mr. Hufsey’s design, and that of other divines, who have adopted his method, was to secure to the holy spirit the sole glory of converting and sanctifying the souls of the elect: but other preachers, who use sober applications, are equally zealous to preserve the glory to God; and, if the latter may not use *application* lest they should rob God of the glory of *sanctifying* the heart, assuredly the former may not use *explication*, lest they should deprive God of the honour of enlightening or informing the *mind*. In both, the means are ours, the blessing his. After all, some have observed these doctrinal divines, who affect to discharge their office fully by narrating and reasoning, and reject persuasion, should not forget, that reasoning is persuasion—and that they themselves slide al-

most as often as any men into personal application, especially in discussing certain favourite points of divinity. This remark is abundantly verified in Mr. Hufsey’s manuscript sermons, a hundred of which, I suppose, I have read; and, I think, I could exemplify it plentifully, were it necessary, from printed sermons of others of his judgment on the article of application.

(2) *Examine yourselves.* Zeph. ii. 1. Our translation has it, *Gather yourselves together, yea gather together, O nation not desired.* The French is, *Epluchez vous, sifit, or examine, consider with attention.*

ששק, recollegit, excussit, inquisivit juxta *Kimchium* proprie est, stipulas colligere, id fit accurata scrutatione, hinc dicitur de qualibet diligenti inquisitione—excute vos ipsos iterum excutite. *Buxtorf.*

*Scrutamini vos ipsos, et scrutamini.* First, examine and reform yourselves, then examine and reform others.—Examine, again and again examine.

O na-

The same may be said of 1 Cor. xi. 28. *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*; for, laying aside all theological observations, you may actually enter upon self examination. (3)

This

*O nation not desired.* Non amabilis—non amata—non desiderabilis. *Hieron.*—Nul-  
lius pudoris. *Grot.*—Thou  
unblushing, unlovely nation,  
enriched with mercies, but  
insensible to all.

*O nation not desiring.* Populus non volens converti ad legem. *Jonathan.*—Non ob-  
stantibus mandatis, monitionibus, promissis, et minis,  
vel nullo, vel non satis valido desiderio moventur. *Marckius.*—O insensible nation, not even desiring to be reformed. *Cocceius.*

(3) *Enter upon examination.* Of this kind is a sermon of Saurin, preached at Rotterdam on new-year's day 1727, from Psalm xc. 12. *So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* He begins thus, "By what privilege does this church nourish so many members in its bosom, to assist in the solemnity of this day, and to compose an assembly so numerous? By what privilege are you with your children, friends, fellow-citizens?—not all—for the mourning, which covers some of you, tells me, death has taken

away one part the last year, &c." Having finished his exordium, by briefly observing the relation the words as a prayer of Moses had to the Israelites, and by addressing a short prayer to God to succeed his endeavours, he says, "Let us apply this to our life, which is so much like that, which the Israelites passed in the desert, let us first reckon our days. And 2dly, Attend to the conclusions, which wisdom draws from the account." First, He reckons those days wherein we feel neither good nor evil, joy nor sorrow, and in which we practise neither vice, nor virtue, and which he calls *days of vanity*, these he numbers and compares with days of *reality*. Secondly, He numbers our days of *adversity* with those of *prosperity*. Thirdly, He compares our days of *weariness*, and *disgust*, with our days of *joy* and *pleasure*. Fourthly, He compares those devoted to the *world*, with those dedicated to *religion*, and finally reckons to what the whole amounts. "I suppose, says he, the devotion of this day has col-

This manner, well and wisely disposed, by choofing proper occasions, will produce (as I have elsewhere

lected eighteen hundred persons to this exercife. I reduce these eighteen hundred persons to fix classes.

The first of persons between 10 and 20, — 530.

The second — between 20 and 30, — 440.

The third — between 30 and 40, — 345.

The fourth — between 40 and 50, — 255.

The fifth — between 50 and 60, — 160.

And the last of those of 60 years and upwards about 70.

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1800.

According to the reckoning of such as pursue these inquiries, each of these classes must furnish a tribute of ten persons this year to death, and upon this principle there must die this year sixty of my hearers, upon the same principle in ten years there will remain only 1270 of these 1800 persons. In 20 years there will remain but 830. In 30 only 480. In 40 but 230. In 50 but 70." He then passes to the conclusions, which wisdom draws, and maintains the applicatory turn to the end. *Tom. xii. sur le compte des jours.*

Of this kind also is a sermon of Fenelon on true and solid piety. The text is *Isai. xxxviii. 15. I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.* He begins by observing how necessary it is for sinners to make an exact scrutiny of their sins, that they may humble themselves before God, and even for the greatest saints, lest their

very graces become hurtful, or the means of inspiring them with pride, presumption, and self-complacence. "The deceitful balances of the world, adds he, which the scripture calls *abominable*, are very different from those, which the justice of God uses to weigh our actions; let us not content ourselves with a conduct outwardly regular, let us examine whether the essence of piety be in our sentiments, and actions. Let us make this examination in regard to God, ourselves, and our neighbours. First, Do you love to suffer for God? Should you believe all his mysteries, your sacrifice would be imperfect, if your will remained unmortified. In vain you follow Jesus Christ, unless you carry the cross with him, in vain you hope for his glory, and kingdom, unless you partake of his reproaches and sufferings, &c. Secondly, Are you disposed to die to be united for ever to Christ?



where said) an excellent effect : but always remember on this rule, that in using this method something searching, and powerful must be said, or it would be better let alone. (4)

We

Christ? There is I know not what secret infidelity in our hearts, which stifles all these sentiments. Who, to see the pains we take to render this life long, and agreeable, who would believe, we expect another perfectly happy, and eternal? The hope of seeing Jesus Christ, that amiable and consoling object, &c. Thirdly, Are we glad to be employed in the service of God? That is to say, do we feel a sincere joy, when we pray, and meditate in his presence? Prayer is the measure of our love, he, that loves much, prays much, he, that loves little, prays little, he, whose heart is closely united to God, has no greater consolation than that of enjoying the presence of the object he loves, &c. 4. Are we determined to give ourselves up disinterestedly to God? Do we regard the care of his providence as our best resource? Whence is it, that so many people undertake good works without success? It is because they undertake them without faith, it is because they do not renounce themselves, &c.

Secondly, Let us examine ourselves. First, Is not our zeal imprudence? 2. Is not

our prudence carnal policy? Thirdly, Is not our devotion the effect of our humour? Fourthly, Is not our charity amusement, our friendships vain and irregular?

Thirdly, Let us examine in regard to our *neighbour*. First, The Foundation of peace with all men is humility, do we humble ourselves to each other? Secondly, Do we perform any good works for one another? Finally, Can you suffer? If you have a lively faith, and strong love, the world will blame and tempt you, and if possible prevent your enjoying the tranquillity of the state; friends and enemies will appear in concert to aim at the ruin of your pious designs, the very people, with whom you are united to glorify God, will in a manner tempt you, different humours and prejudices will try you, their defects and yours will perpetually jar, unless, &c." *Oeuvres philos. tom. ii. p. 437. edit. Amst. 1731.*

(4) *Application produces excellent effects.* There seem to me three essentials of a good applicatory sermon.—1. A *select subject* wisely and judiciously adapted to the state of the hearers addressed.—

We will exemplify one of the texts, which may be discussed by way of perpetual application. Let us take St. Paul's words to the Philippians, *Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling.* Begin with a tender exordium, lamenting the condition of mankind, that so few know the truth; for there is almost an infinite number, to whom it is not preached, who are left in the thickest darkness; almost an infinite number, to whom it is preached, who corrupt it with errors and superstitions, and who almost never hear it but with a confused mixture of falsehoods and human inventions; almost an infinite number of such as know it clearly: but yet neglect it, and by their negligence preclude the admirable fruits, which it ought to

2. A *temper* in the preacher, while he discusses it, free from anger, and sourness, and every other bad disposition, and breaking out all along with the discussion so as to free the auditors from all suspicion of malice or collusion, and to overpower them with a full persuasion, that the minister sincerely aims to promote their felicity. To reprove is to break a bone, or to lay on a blister, and tender skill is essential to the operation. How many just reproofs have lost all their force by the imprudence of him, who gave them!—3. A *conformity of exterior circumstances*. A certain negligence of dress, a certain inattention to style and method, the absence of every thing

tending to divert attention, and the presence of whatever tends to excite it, are necessary on these occasions. A prodigious fat priest in a certain parish, on a fast day ascended the pulpit with a good sermon and an honest heart, I dare say: but he produced only risibility in his hearers through innocent exterior circumstance. His soul seemed buried alive in fat many a fathom deep, his mouth pointed above the opposite gallery, his eyes rolled towards the ceiling, when forth from collops of fat came these words,—“Colossians—the third—chapter, and—the fifth verse—*mortify therefore your members—which—are—upon the earth*” — On a fast day the worthy man should have

to produce. Having expressed astonishment that *so few will be saved*, and finally having shewed the true causes, why so few apply to it in the manner they ought, the exordium must be finished by an exhortation to profit by this time of our calling, and not when we go out of the world to have to ask ourselves what we have been doing in it; and to reproach ourselves with having abused the patience and mercy of God. *Let us now work our salvation with fear, and trembling, &c.* This exordium

have read prayers. How would he have shone in this part of the litany; "That it may please thee to give and preserve to our use the *kindly* fruits of the earth, so as in due time we may *enjoy* them."

Bp. Burnet says, "Great judgment must be used to make applications fall the heaviest, and lie the longest on such particulars as may be within the compass of the auditory: directions concerning high devotion to a stupid ignorant company, or of generosity and bounty, to a very poor people; against pride and ambition to such as are dull and low-minded, are ill-suited and so must have little effect on them.—The application must be clear and short, very weighty and free of every thing that looks like the affectations of wit, and eloquence; here the preacher must be all heart and soul, designing the good of his people.—If he is master of eloquence he is to employ it

all in giving sometimes such tender touches as may soften, and deeper gashes such as may awaken his hearers—such an eloquence as makes the hearers look grave, and as it were out of countenance, is the properest. *Past. care. chap. 9.*

Adapting the matter to the audience at court in Harry the VIII. days, had like to have conveyed honest Latimer from the pulpit to the tower, but his simple apology saved him. "I had been a very dolt to have preached so, at the borders of your realme, as I preache before your grace. I never thought myself worthy, nor I never sued to be a preacher before your grace, but I was called to it, and would be willing if you mislike me to give place to my betters; but if your grace allowe me for a preacher, I woulde desire your grace, to geve me leave to discharge my conscience." *Latimer's sermons.*



ordium must be rendered lively and agreeable, and executed so that it may awaken the hearer, and obtain a particular attention. (5)

This

(5) *In applicatory sermons, you should endeavour to obtain a particular attention.* Here, if any where, the preacher should address the eyes, and ears of his auditors, as well as their reason; for to hear truths, which directly address the passions, delivered in a cold, lifeless, unaffected manner, is enough to make a man mad. *Abbe Furetiere* tells us a tale not foreign from the purpose. "A gentleman attended a certain prince one day to a sermon. The prince asked him at his return what he thought of the preacher. Loth to say any thing to the preacher's disadvantage, and not being able in conscience to praise him, he told the prince, that his attention was diverted from the pulpit by the behaviour of a young ecclesiastick, who, standing by a pillar near his seat, behaved like a raving madman. He wrung his hands—he rolled his eyes to heaven—he stamped—he exclaimed—*O! Monsieur Racine!* — *O! Monsieur Racine!* What could he mean? said the prince. I asked him what was the matter, as we came out, continued the gentleman, and he said, What fir! did you never hear what happened to Monsieur Racine's tragedy of Alexander,

which is a finished piece? His friends had all assured him, it was an excellent tragedy, and they had great reason for saying so. Trusting to their judgment, he gave it Moliere's company to act. What followed? It was damned the first night. Racine was extremely chagrined at this disappointment, and reproached his friends with either want of judgment, or fidelity. O, said they, the tragedy is excellent: but Moliere's company excel only in comedy, and they spoiled it in acting. Give it to the Burgundy-hotel, and, you'll see, it will meet with applause. He followed their advice, and the piece gained him great reputation. Now, this is my case, I composed the sermon which you just now heard. In the opinion of connoisseurs it is a finished piece. Unhappily, I gave it to this vile executioner to preach, and see what effects it produced in his ungoverned mouth! where he should have elevated his voice, you could hardly hear him; and in the soft and tender parts, where he should have melted his audience, the beast belled like a mad bull. But I'll play Monsieur Racine with him, I'll take my ser-

mon

This being done, you must observe, that, were you about to treat of these words in the ordinary way, you could not fail to make several reflections on the doctrines. 1. On these terms *your own salvation*, which are very weighty, and of great importance.—2. On St. Paul's command, that we should *work it out*, on which you would have many things to say, and finally on that *fear and trembling*, which must accompany our labour, for many important reflections would also arise from that—but, you may add, that, laying apart all doctrines, which very often serve only for amusement through our levity, your design is to endeavour to enable your auditors to do what St. Paul commands; and to assist them actually to labour during this hour devoted to piety to *work out their own salvation with that fear and trembling*, which so great a work demands. (6)

Here,

mon from him, and I'll give it to somebody, who knows how to pronounce it." *Furrieriana*, p. 73.

One of our writers on this subject observes, "There are *two extremes* in the voice. The one is a *drawling dullness*, which shews unconcernedness and want of zeal. The other is a *boisterous noise*, which argues rudeness, and want of modesty and manners. There are also *two extremes* in *action*. Some are *mimical*, fantastical, and violent; this is rude and irreverent. Others stand like *images*, and preach without any motion at all; this is stupid and unnatural. Mo-

tion should be grave, decent, free, natural, moderate and suitable, without distortion, constraint, or affectation. All rules of preaching are reducible to *four heads*. It should be *plain—practical—methodical—affectionate*."

*Glanvil's Essay on preaching*, part I.

(6) *Enable your auditors to work out their own salvation*. This way of preaching has of late been almost totally laid aside by many pious men, under a mistaken notion of its incongruity with the doctrine of decrees. I will not venture to say, it is consistent with *their* notions of the decrees: but I trust I may be

Here, because the subject is practical, and one would wish to open all avenues to conscience, and effectually to move the hearer, it would not be improper (after making a kind of division into three parts, the first of which should be some considerations on *our own salvation*. Secondly, the acts by which we *work it out*. And lastly, the *fear and trembling*, with which these acts are accompanied.) to put up a short prayer to God in form of a wish, brief, but lively, that it may please him to bless this sermon, and to give us all necessary power to enable us to set about the work of our salvation, that it may be much forwarded, before we go out of the assembly. (7)

After

be allowed to say without offence, it is perfectly agreeable to the *scripture* doctrine of decrees, for this plain reason: the same scripture, which teaches the one, exemplifies the other; and he, who from all eternity foresaw, and fore-ordained (which when we speak of God is the same thing.) what would be the end of all things, formally declares, that, *as he lives, he desireth not the death of a sinner: but had rather that he should turn and live*. For this purpose he orders his ministers to bid to the marriage *as many as they find, and even compel them to come in, that his house may be filled*. It would become ministers to do all his commands *without murmuring and without disputing*, to leave to God the harmonizing of his word,

as well as of his works of nature, and moral government: and, if any objector demand consistency, to say, *I know the Messias cometh, who is called Christ, and when he comes he will tell us all things*.

(7) *It is not improper to put up a short prayer to God*. Some preachers do this constantly, others only on particular occasions. Foreign preachers afford many beautiful patterns. Here follow a few.

Dominus Deus adsit nobis spiritu suo! *Concio I. Didact. Focconis.*

Deus, pater omnis consolationis, largiatur nobis vivificam spem omnis consolationis, faciat que ut corda nostra valde exsultent, et clangant, ad ejus gloriam, et nostri omnium salutem!

*Concio I. Consolatoria.*  
Adsit



After this preparation, the first thing you may, say, which I beseech you to meditate on, is, that God has had so much compassion for us as to prepare a *salvation*. We were his enemies, and he has mercifully proposed reconciliation. We were dead,

Adsit nobis Jehova spiritu suo sancto, et hanc gratiam nobis largiatur, ut hanc partem solide explicemus, et doctrinam, quæ ex ea emanat, observemus ad commodum nostrum. Amen. *Con. II. Debortatoria.*

The bishop of Bellai in France used to say, "Two things surprized him, the one, that the Roman Catholics, who say the bible is a very obscure book, so seldom explain it in their sermons; and the other, that the protestants, who affirm it is as clear as the day, should do nothing but explain it in their churches." This remark is not altogether improper; in some reformed churches, as well as in the popish church, sermons are almost shut out to make room for long liturgies, and the defence of them takes up the remaining short time, that ought to be applied to the explication of the oracles of God. In some other communities, long and perpetual preaching almost excludes prayer. This is notorious in the last prayer, which is generally too short: but which might be rendered

very edifying, were the preacher to recapitulate and pray over the chief heads of his sermon. *See Bibliot. anc. et mod. tom. xiv. 1720.*

Our preachers say often in their sermons—May God bless this word to our edification!—Lord! write this truth on our hearts!—Blessed spirit sanctify our attention!—O thou, who knowest our insufficiency, assist us we beseech thee! &c. &c. &c.

"Superstition (says Voltaire) is to religion what astrology is to astronomy, a very foolish daughter of a very wise mother; these two daughters, adds he, have a long time enslaved the whole world." True: but in avoiding superstition let us take care of atheism. Our ancestors seemed to think themselves in an enchanted world, and one of our gravest historians at the Reformation attributes the loss of an English fleet in a storm to the *necromancers of the Frenche kynge*; and hence those numerous exorcisms in religious worship, wherein it was hard to say whether God or the devil were invoked. The reformation awoke men as out of a dream, who, per-

dead, and he has prepared a resurrection for us. We were plunged into an abyss of misery, and he has kindly stretched out his hand from on high to help us. Salvation consists in benefits inexpressible, of immense value, which we cannot sufficiently esteem; for they must be proportioned to the worth of the blood of Jesus Christ who merited them.

This

ceiving how they had been imposed on, thought they could never get far enough from ignorance and superstition, till, not knowing where to stop, we are fallen into downright infidelity and irreligion. Compare our modern English historians with Rollin, and other foreign writers on this head, and it will soon appear, that infidelity is our fashionable crime, and that the late Mr. Hervey complained but too justly, that in such a voyage as Lord Anson's so many fine opportunities were lost of acknowledging the mighty God in the great deep. This is a single instance: but it is a true specimen of the whole. Whatever historians, or philosophers may do, least of all, surely, can divines avoid *setting the Lord always before us*, particularly in the pulpit. Is it not an article of our faith, that *without him we can do nothing*? Our author would inculcate this, and well knowing that, prayer before sermon being ended, the people would dispense with divine help while

they listened to the preacher, at least they would not retain a sense of its *necessity* on their minds, directs to a short petition here, and he has the sanction of able preachers to confirm the rule. Here follow examples. "The descent of the spirit is the mystery of which I am to speak to day: but as we cannot see light without light, so neither can we speak of the spirit of God without the succours of the same spirit. Without him every heart is intractable, every word unfruitful, without him every preacher preaches in vain; without him every hearer is insensible to the truth, even though he hear it, let us then address our prayers together to him, &c." *Fleebier ser. tom. ii. pentecote.*

"In vain we form the wise design of redeeming future time, if we have not time to execute it. O God! our *times are in thy hand*, thou needest only say to these mortals, *Return ye sons of men*, and all these bodies now alive and in motion will become carcases without motion,

This blood, which has acquired them for us, is of all things in the world the most sacred and valuable, and yet the most mournful and affecting. Enter then, I intreat you, with me into this meditation. Whence is it, we take so little pains about that, which is so very important to us? Salvation presents itself every day to us as a rich treasure, coming from the bosom of eternal mercy, as the divine and incomparable production of the bloody death of the Son of God. It is a vessel, which presents itself to us in this ad shipwreck, that we have made. Yet we do not think about it, and when we reflect on the little attention, that we

motion, and without life, and all our designs will be unsuccessful. Leave us only to our own vanity, and the vapour of our life will dissipate, and lose itself in the air. Suspend thine order great God in favour of this assembly of penitents! preserve this vapour a little longer! grant each of us a little more time, that we may recover what we have lost! O grant we may think on our ways and return to thy testimonies. Amen." *Saur. serm. on redemption of time, tom. viii.*

"My brethren, let us seek the presence of God with all the application, let us demand it with all the ardour, of which we are capable. Let us say to our Jesus as once his disciples did, *Lord abide with us, for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent!* God grant this prayer may be heard. Amen!"

*Saur. serm. on the presence of God, tom. vii.*

"Thou great God! God of love! bless extraordinarily this holy work! root out of our hearts this *love of the world*, which is *enmity against thee!* grant us grace to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and deign at length, according to thy promise, to add all other things unto us. Amen!" *Super-ville, tom. i. ser. 6.*

Thus Massillon in his sermon on the ambition of the clergy, after the exordium, "May it please Jesus Christ, my brethren, that truths so important, may fall upon teachable and prepared hearts!"—Again, on the use of church revenues, after the division, "It remains, O my God, only with thee to bless these instructions, and to give ears to those that hear me." *Tom. i. confer.*



we have hitherto paid to the voice of God, who hath so often spoken to us, we are astonished to find ourselves under such extreme stupidity. (8)

That

Indeed, there is hardly a French sermon to be found without this necessary part. A part so reasonable that, it is said, Pericles never spoke in public at Athens till he had prayed the gods to direct him.

(8) Our author discovers great ability in discussing this subject in the applicatory method. It is extremely delicate and difficult.—1. He makes a judicious choice of *topicks*, all true, indisputable and of allowed importance.—2. He selects that *part* of each *topick*, which is best adapted to his purpose, not aiming to say all that could be said: but only what suited his present particular view.—3. He makes each article project into a striking point of view by *contrast*.—4. He supple and softens the auditor by a *tender mode of expression*.—In all he appears a *master of assemblies fastening nails in a sure place*. I allude to Eccl. xii. 11.

First, The *topick* here is *salvation*, the important wish of every human soul.

Secondly, Salvation is considered as springing from *mercy*—flowing through *mediatorial blood*—and bringing along with it an ocean of rich *benefits*; parts only of the to-

pick: but parts highly adapted to touch the heart.

Thirdly, The mercy of God is contrasted with our *misery*—the agonies of Christ set against our *insensibility*—the *benefits* proposed against *damage, danger, and death*. All this is heightened with the beautiful *image* of a shipwrecked mariner inattentive to a friendly vessel coming on purpose to save him, a vessel freighted with treasures for him infinitely exceeding all he had lost.

Fourthly, All is softened with melting phrase—*Meditate, I beseech you*—God *mercifully* proposes salvation—he *kindly stretcheth out* his hand—Salvation comes from the *bosom* of mercy, &c. &c. These are “*apes in tenero Claudii ore dulces favos ponentes.*” I allude to the fable of Plato’s bees.

The human passions are sources of eloquence, and no minister can possibly excel in this part of pulpit eloquence, unless his own affections be thoroughly moved. The christian pastor, of all men in the world, should have an affectionate heart. When he preaches thus, it is the shepherd in search of his strayed sheep, the father in pursuit of his lost child. Is

That we may the better perceive the importance of this salvation, and the necessity of attaching ourselves to it, methinks, we need only turn our eyes a little to the miserable state of those, who neglect it during the whole course of their lives, and at length go out of the world without having at all employed themselves about it. Behold! I beseech you, what a great number of unbelieving and profane sinners there are in the world! Would you choose to be of their number? One is a giddy young creature, whose head is full of nothing but pranks, and mistakes. Another is an old miser, who has filled his house with extortions and iniquities. A third is a proud and cruel wretch, who delights and glories in violence and blood like a wild beast. A fourth is a sly hypocrite, who never appears in the world unmasked, who never goes out but to set snares, nor ever stirs but to deceive the simple, a notorious impostor, who thinks only how he may impose on the whole world. Another is a filthy epicure, always drowned in wine, or immersed in sensual pleasures, a swine whose soul is buried in flesh, and who thinks of nothing but how to invent new pleasures. (9)

How

it possible for statues to discharge this part of necessary duty! As well might a marble parent supply the place of a real one.

(9) *A proud and cruel man - - is a wild beast—an epicure - - is a swine.* Our author's aim is to excite hatred of sin, pride, intemperance, and so on. To do this, laying aside a false finical delicacy, he exposes vice to view under disagree-

able images. Scripture and profane writers exemplify the method. In general, we may previously observe, on the one hand, that purity and simplicity of manners are generally accompanied with a blunt, rough, rank speech; and, on the other, that depravity of manners generally hides itself under an affected refinement and delicacy of style. The old prophets spoke bluntly: but they were very

How many abyſſes has vice opened to ingulph mankind! Into how many ſhapes does it transform itſelf to ſurprize and deſtroy them! Sometimes it appears under the beautiful vail of riches and grandeurs,

very holy. Modern courtiers ſpeak refinedly: but they are behind the curtain extremely vicious. Here and there indeed a bold libertine is an exception to this rule.

S. Jude calls the wicked *brute beaſts*, verſe 10. 2 Pet.

ii. 12.—S. Peter reſembles a backſlider to a dog turning again to his own vomit; a ſow that was waſhed wallowing in the mire. 2 Pet. ii. 22.

—The Lord likens the lukewarm to an emetic, and ſays, *I will ſpue thee out of my mouth*. Rev. iii. 16.—The prophet likens the Jews to a brazen, ſcolding, prostitute,

a meer billingsgate, *Thou doſt the work of an imperious whoriſh woman*. Ezek. xvi. 30.—He compares national ſubſidies to the gifts of a rake to his miſtreſs, verſe 33.—All naſty images expreſſive of a filthy people, whoſe vices rendered them objects of general abhorrence.

In this view, we do not wholly approve of Aristotle's rule. He ſays, Tropes ſhould be taken from agreeable things. (*Rhet.* iii. 2. 4.) Nor can we with the archbiſhop of Cambray wholly reject the propriety of Horace's line,

*Proſcripti regis Rupili* *pus atque venenum.*

For, at this rate, unjuſt actions, and odious perſons could never be expoſed by imagery, agreeable images cannot colour diſagreeable objects, and to be denied the uſe of the latter would deprive an orator of one mean of perſuaſion. However, we allow the rule in general, and think great caution neceſſary in the agreeable uſe of diſagreeable images.

If it be neceſſary after ſcription to add human authority, the following may be ſubjoined, “*Sin vile ſit argu-*

*mentum et ſervile, metaphoræ quoque tales erunt, veluti ſterquilinum publicum pro ſordido lenone—Laberius vetulam impudicam et moroſam vocavit grunnientem ſcrofum—Lucius Pomponius ſtultum quendam comicum irridens vocat comicum commicilem, hoc eſt dignum, in quem canes meiſant.”* *Eman. Theſaur. orat. de metaph. cap. viii.*

“*Qui in ſtatuas mortuorum ſæviunt ſimiles ſunt canibus, qui ſaxum mordent, non illum, qui projecit.”*

*Plato. Rep. v.*

“*Plebs*



deurs, sometimes under the agreeable charms of sensual pleasures, sometimes under the justice of supporting one's own interests and satiating a just revenge, sometimes under the reasons we have to envy another's prosperity, sometimes under the idea of the joy of succeeding in a lawful enterprize, or under an idea of the shame of not succeeding in what we have undertaken. In short, sin is a Proteus changing itself into a thousand shapes, or, if you will, a serpent twisting itself a thousand ways to slide into men's hearts, in order to prevent their thinking about their salvation. (1)

Moreover, if you cast your eyes on this part of the world, which appears the most civilized and refined, you will see people so immersed in an almost infinite number of occupations perpetually employing them, that there does not remain a moment to think of the most important matters. Some are wrapt up in the study of human sciences, and others in worldly employments. Each gives himself up entirely, and none remembers that piety and the fear of God ought to be a pro-

"Plebs est similis nauscan-  
tibus, qui alimenta sua eji-  
ciunt." *Demosthenes.*

"Poësis est similis formæ ju-  
venili, nam si hæc defloruit,  
et ista numerum amisit, utra-  
que caret gratia." *Demos-  
thenes.*

"Oratores nutricibus sunt  
similes, quæ cibos ipsæ de-  
vorant, saliva autem pueros  
inungunt." *Democrates apud  
Arist. Rhet. iii. 4.*

See how Cicero describes  
Anthony the younger, who  
had got so drunk at the wed-  
ding of *Clippias* as to vomit

next day in open court. *Cic.  
Phil. 2.*

(1) *Sin disguises and varies  
itself.* Man cannot, it is al-  
lowed, pursue evil under the  
idea of evil: he pursues it  
under the notion of good.  
Hence *deception* is essential  
to the empire of sin. This  
is carried on various ways—  
as by giving vices the names  
of virtues—by proposing sin-  
ful pursuits *partially*, &c. &c.  
It is glorious to religion to  
require nothing but exposure  
to recommend it.

profession common to them all. Piety does not hinder lawful employments : but it restrains them within proper bounds, that itself may not be hindered by them. (2)

To these considerations you may add another, which more immediately regards good people, that is, the small number of believers, who in a manner are separated from the world to serve God. It is certain, that, at what distance soever we are removed from the world, and it's vanities, we have yet too much communication with worldly things, on which account we should look upon our salvation as in perpetual danger of being torn from us. We are, I grant, separated from the worldly by the

(2) *Piety does not hinder lawful employments.* This article should be thoroughly inculcated among young people under first religious impressions. When the light of religion first breaks in upon a benighted soul, it discovers so many great and glorious objects, that a little human mind is apt to be absorbed in them. It is the same under great distress, and in high enjoyments.—*My heart is smitten so, that I forget to eat my bread.* Psal. cii. 4.—*The disciples had forgotten to take bread.* Mat. xvi. 5. *The woman left her water-pot, and went her way.* John iv. 28.—*He, that was healed, wist not who it was.* John v. 13.—*Joseph and his mother knew not of it.* Luke ii. 43.—*I, Dániel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, &c.* Dan. x. 23.

Young people should be exhorted to excel in their several professions, religion is honoured by it, and an old calumny is wiped off. *Pharaoh said, Ye are idle, ye are idle, therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord.* Exod. v. 17.—*The king said, Ye, Moses and Aaron, hinder the people from their works.* v. 4. S. Paul exhorts to what we recommend, Titus iii. 8. 14. See page 11. of this volume. For this reason some of us preach lectures in villages on week-days at five in the morning, before poor people go to work, and at seven in the evening, after they have done, and industrious people find leisure to attend them : but unless they excel in business all day, we cannot bid slanderers desistance.

the profession of the gospel: but do we not yet live in a commerce with them in civil life? and are we not consequently always exposed to the influence of their bad examples, and to the false shame of seeing ourselves opposite in sentiments, maxims, and customs to the rest of mankind? are we not exposed to the flattering baits of their promises, the violence of their threatnings, the delusion of their sophisms and artifices, and in one word to an infinite number of temptations arising from them? (3)

Were we, through these temptations, prevailed on to lay aside the work of our salvation for a time, or to labour but negligently at it, our loss would be inevitable. You cannot but see how necessary it is never to discontinue the work we have undertaken, never to relax, but rather to *hold fast what we have received till the Lord comes*. Salvation can never be obtained unless we strive against the

(3) *We are in danger from worldly connections.* Casuists will distinguish those connections with bad men, which are *necessary*, from others, which are *arbitrary*, depending solely on the will of the christian. Of the first sort are, 1. All *natural* connections with parents, brethren, sisters, children, and so on. 2. All *civil* connections for government, trade, literature, and so on. These connections are not sinful: but they may be productive of much sin through our imprudence. *Arbitrary* connections are sinful in themselves, they lie out of the path of duty, and

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they generally produce great misery and scandal. S. Paul preferred the company of a bad man, who did not profess to be religious, before that of a loose living professor of christianity. *I wrote unto you not to company with fornicators. Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have writtten unto you not to keep company, if any man, that is called a brother, be a fornicator, &c.* 1 Cor. v. 9, 10, 11. See a critique on this verse, vol. i. p. 145.

X x



the stream of the world. We must not only make some efforts; but we must make them perpetually; for, if we suspend or diminish our efforts ever so little, it will be impossible for us not to be carried away. Sin will gain ground by the least negligence, and considerably remove us from the end we propose. It is not in this spiritual work as it is in temporal concerns; we may lay aside the latter for a time without suffering any damage: but as to our salvation, it is certain, the least interruption is capable of retarding it, and two days of suspension will ruin more than a thousand well-spent days can advance. (4)

After

(4) *Salvation requires continual efforts.* Our Lord's language is very remarkable, Luke xiii. 24. *STRIVE to enter in at the strait gate.* Ἀγωνίζεσθε. Erasmus renders it *Laborate*—Vatablus has it *Certate*—Lucas Brugensis paraphrases it, *Enitimini omnibus viribus.* The word is certainly very expressive, equal to our English phrase *strain every nerve*, or, without a figure, *earnestly employ all your powers* to obtain eternal happiness.

Our divines generally make two practical remarks on these words. 1. The words are an *answer* to a question. *One said, Lord, are there few, that be saved?* To this curious useless question the Lord replies, *Strive to enter*, and so on; as if he had said, Do not inquire concerning abstruse and use-

less subjects: but employ your time and attention to secure your own salvation.

2. The words *prove*, that, be the secret purpose of God what it may, there is nothing in it to excuse indolence, or to discourage diligence. Do you ask, *Are there few that be saved?* I have said, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*, Mat. vii. 14. but there is nothing in this doctrine inconsistent with striving: on the contrary, it enforces the utmost diligence.

The scripture useth a great number of strong, significant terms, fully expressive of the greatest attention. *Strive—labour—run—wrestle—fight—give diligence* to make your calling and election sure. 2 Pet. i. 10.

After all, say you, what interest have we in this salvation? and why must we quit all things to apply ourselves to this with so much diligence, and earnestness? My brethren, to judge rightly of the interest you have in it, I intreat you to consider some few truths, which are not unknown to you, although perhaps they have never made all the impression on you, which they ought to have made. Remember, then, you must die, this necessity is imposed on us all, in so inviolable a manner, that no man can possibly exempt himself. Remember, God has hid from you, under an impenetrable veil the hour of your death, and all that you can know is, that your life will be short, and that there does not pass one single moment, in which your death may not happen. You are always in danger, and always liable to some dreadful accident. Remember, immediately after your death, you must be obliged to appear and answer for the *deeds done in the body* before the tribunal of God; for, as God is the governor of the universe, and you are not only one of his creatures, but one of his reasonable creatures, for whom he has made laws, and prescribed the bounds and measures of their duty, he must necessarily be your judge. (5)

As,

(5) *Remember, you must die.* Saurin somewhere says, he chose to introduce death into every sermon, as that subject, which was best adapted to affect the hearers, and to render them tenacious of religious impressions. Most of our masters in Israel do so, especially in their applications, and good effects are generally produced. It is not impossible, however, that

this subject may be familiarized till it has no force. Sickness and death do not appear to physicians and soldiers as they do to other men, whose professions never throw them in the way of the dying or the dead. On this, then, as well as on a thousand other articles, prudence must guide the preacher; *wisdom is profitable to direct.* Eccl. x. 10. Our author's transition from  
X x 2 death,

As, then, death is inevitable, so is judgment but alas! what judgment! a judgment so terrible that St. Peter reasons in this manner, *If the righteous scarcely be saved where shall the wicked and ungodly appear?* (6) A judgment so dreadful, that sinners will cry to the *mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us, hide us from the face of the lamb, for the day of his wrath is come.* A judgment so exact that all our thoughts and all our words, all the principles and emotions of our consciences, all the secrets of our hearts, our connections, ways, ends, artifices, crimes, in general all that belong to us shall be discovered before the eyes, and under the hands of our judge, nor can any thing escape the light of his eyes, or the trial of  
of

death to judgment is natural and beautiful, and his choice of these plain, easy articles in an *applicatory* discourse is agreeable to the nature of it; for here the preacher should select clear, allowed truths, which require little or no exercise of judgment in the auditor. The heart is to be impressed, and the mind must be relieved from suspense, and engaged by evidence to affect the heart. "In applicatione necessaria est ingenii vis et celeritas, quæ duas res, quæ videntur remotæ et dissimilaneæ, conciliat; et porro requiritur singularis in vocibus et comparationibus perspicuitas, ut auditor sine labore veritatem et rerum convenientiam agnoscat." *Eman. Thesaur. de art. erat. Metaph. Deceptionis.*

(6) *If the righteous scarcely be saved.* 1 Pet. iv. 18. Our author very properly applies this passage to a *future* state, at the happiness of which the righteous arrive with difficulty, through the various afflictions, persecutions, and temptations, that lie in the way: but the words seem literally to belong to the *then present* state of the church, when S. Peter wrote. We submit the four following reasons to consideration. 1. The epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and the writer adverts much to that expected event. 2. The preceding verse says, *the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God,* that is to say, national calamities must overwhelm us along with our countrymen,



of his wisdom and equity. Above all, remember, this judgment must needs be followed with eternal life, or eternal death, with perfect salvation or damnation. There is no medium between these things, heaven and hell will then divide the world, and they, who have not the happiness of hearing this comfortable voice, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you*, will receive this dreadful sentence, *Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*. This judgment is so certain, that the Lord, not content only to declare it in his word, gives us some forebodings of it in our consciences. What believer does not feel every day a tribunal of God prepared in his heart? who does not hear this secret voice demanding an account of his actions, making inquiry into the use he has made of benefits received, of the obedience he has rendered to the law, the fruit he has yielded to the gospel, the improvement of opportunities, and, in one word, of the virtues he has practised, or the sins he has committed? who is that sinner, however insensible, who does not frequently feel in his heart some presentiments of this judgment? Do not all the fears and terrors, the inquietudes, and remorse, which usually agitate wicked men, come from hence? We have every one of us these prelibations throughout

men, the Jews. 3. The text is a quotation from the septuagint version of Prov. xi. 31. *Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinners*. S. Peter's *scarcely saved* is synonymous to the wise man's *recompensed in the earth*. 4. The fol-

lowing verse recommends patience under *present* sufferings. Our author's application of the passage to final judgment is rational; for, if present afflictions try the righteous and terrify the wicked, what must the final judgment do?

out life: but they become incomparably stronger at the approach of death. Then man feels the hand, the mighty hand of the omnipotent God drawing him to himself. Then is he seized and forced in spite of himself before the throne of the sovereign judge of the world. In these last moments of life, as the eyes of the body are darkened, those of the mind are enlightened, and, penetrating into the secrets of the world to come, discover the good or evil consequences, which we must expect. What dreadful blindness is it then, that, with so much certainty, so many marks, so many outward and inward testimonies of this divine judgment, we should yet neglect to prepare for it, and leave an article so capital, on which eternity depends, to hazard. (7)

One of the most useful and admirable powers, which nature has bestowed upon man, and which follows reason, and distinguishes man from other animals, is prudence, a sagacity respecting future things. Beasts, which have not received this advantage

(7) *Consider judgment.* The force and the beauty of this branch of our author's application lie in the *properties* of the subject. A judgment so terrible—a judgment so exact—a judgment so certain—a judgment inevitable—a judgment that *issues* in eternal happiness or misery, this is the subject, and these the properties of it, which the wisdom of God uses to alarm and affect a sinner. How highly fitted to answer the end!

That incomparable sermon of Massillon, entitled *the death*

*of the righteous and the wicked*, is all made up of these plain, affecting articles. I could never read his description of the wicked man's *last* moment's without a mixture of pity and fear. The passage begins with "Alors le pecheur mourant," and ends thus. "At length, amidst these distressful efforts, his eyes fix—his features alter—his countenance is disfigured—his livid mouth falls open of itself—his whole frame trembles—and, by a final struggle, his unhappy soul starts with reluctance from its

tage from the hand of nature, only act and display their feeble senses about present things; they walk the way, that offers to their eyes, they eat the herb, which they see, and only move as they are inticed by the objects, at which they look: but, as they have no knowledge of futurity, they are at perfect rest. It is quite otherwife with man, his reason anticipates years, and ages, he sees things long before they arrive, he knows them by a concatenation of their causes and effects, and at the same time provides to forward or to frustrate them. (8) By this prudential foresight kingdoms and

its habitation of clay, falls into the hands of God, and finds itself naked at the bar of his formidable tribunal.

Thus, my brethen, do they die, who forget God through life! Thus will you die, if your sins accompany you to your death. Every object around you will change, you alone will remain the same—you will die: and you will

die wicked, as you have lived; your death will resemble your life - - - - - O preclude this misery by living the life of the righteous." *Serm. Advent.*

(8) *Beasts have no knowledge of futurity.* This argument for the immortality of the human soul is prettily urged in the following lines;

Deep in rich pasture, will thy flocks complain?  
Not so; but to their master is deny'd  
To share their sweet *serene*. Man, ill at ease,  
In this, not *his own* place, this foreign field,  
Where nature foddors him with other food,  
Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,  
Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,  
Sighs on for something *more*, when *most* enjoy'd.  
Is heav'n then kinder to thy flocks, than thee?  
Not so; thy pasture richer, but remote;  
In part, remote; for that remoter part  
Man bleats from *instinct*, tho' perhaps, debauch'd  
By *sense*, his *reason* sleeps, nor dreams the cause.  
The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes!  
His grief is but his grandeur in disguise;  
And discontent is *immortality*. *Night Thoughts, N. 7.*

“Tous



and empires support themselves, by this cities and families are preserved, and by this all men endeavour, each as far as it is in his power, to procure a comfortable condition in this life. (9) How then comes it to pass, that, while we employ our prudence so usefully about temporal things, we are all on a sudden deprived of it, when we should be concerned about the most important of all future things,

“Tous les autres êtres, contents de leur destinée, paroissent heureux, à leur manière dans la situation où l’auteur de la nature les a placés : les astres tranquilles dans le firmament ne quittent pas leur séjour pour aller éclairer une autre terre : la terre réglée dans ses mouvemens ne s’élance pas en haut pour aller prendre leur place : les animaux rampent dans les campagnes, sans envier la destinée de l’homme qui habite les villes, et les palais somptueux ; les oiseaux se réjouissent dans les airs, sans penser s’il y a des créatures plus heureuses qu’eux sur la terre : tout est heureux—l’homme seul ne rencontre rien ici-bas où son cœur puisse le fixer, &c. *Maff. sur l’avenir, tom. i. car.*

(9) By prudent foresight cities and empires are preserved. There are two general causes of the preservation of states, the first are internal, and subsist in the states themselves ; these may be foreseen : but the last, external causes, cannot be foreseen, because they depend

on an infinite variety of circumstances. The three sorts of government, monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy have others, which resemble them, and into which they often degenerate, and so dissolve themselves. Monarchy may run into despotism, aristocracy into oligarchy, and democracy into anarchy. Those governments, which have the strongest constitutional checks against degeneracy, are best calculated to perpetuate themselves, and the operation of these checks may be foreseen, and foretold. On these principles Polybius, and others, foretold the fate of Rome, and other states.

On principles somewhat similar wise men foresee and foretell the fate of individuals. Thus Hector foretold the death of Achilles, and Patroclus that of Hector. (*Hom. Il. xvi. 852. xxii. 358.*) These, and other such instances of human sagacity, must not be confounded with a spirit of prophecy.

things, salvation or damnation? is it not for this reason, that St. Paul, speaking of worldly men, calls them animals? (1) *The animal man, says he, receiveth not the things of the spirit of God.* As if he had said, This man, who for the world testifies that he is truly man, who has so much industry, vivacity, and penetration for futurity, and so much solidity of judgment in the choice of ways and means, is yet a brute beast, a simple animal without reason and without intelligence, when the affair of his salvation is in question. Let us not be of this number, my brethren, let us not sleep like the foolish virgins, while we wait for the bridegroom. Jesus Christ is *made unto us wisdom*, and this wisdom consists in always having the eyes open, and the mind concerned and active about what must follow this life, and the means, by which we may attain eternal felicity. (2)

I can-

(1) *The natural man, &c.* 1 Cor. ii. 14. *L'homme animal ne comprend point les choses qui sont de Dieu.* Our text has it, the *natural man*, (*Ψυχικὸς ἀνθρώπου*) on which archbishop Leighton makes this remark. "The apostle 1 Cor. ii. 14. names the man by his best part, his soul, intimating that the soul even in the highest faculty of it, the understanding, and that in the highest pitch of excellency, to which nature can raise it, is blind to *spiritual* objects." *Select works*, p. 6.

Mr. Claude does not understand the apostle's *Ψυχικὸς* in so exalted a sense: but seems to use it with naturalists for what is common to

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irrational; "the scripture does not term men peculiarly captivated to brutish affections *Ψυχικοὶ ἄνθρωποι*, natural men, but *αλογα ζῶοντα*, 2 Pet. ii. 12. *natural brute beasts*. Austin therefore expounds it thus (*Tract.* 98. *Johan.*) *animalis homo*, i. e. *qui secundum hominem sapit*, *animalis dictus ab anima*, *carnalis a carne*, *quia ex anima et carne constat omnis homo*, *non percipit ea quæ sunt spiritus dei*, i. e. *Quid gratia credentibus conferat crux Christi, &c.*" *Owen on the spirit*, p. 217.

(2) *Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom.* 1 Cor. i. 30. The scope of this place determines the meaning of S.

Y y

Paul

I cannot help observing here two illusions, to which the greatest part of mankind are subject. First, we almost always imagine, our salvation is a very easy thing, which requires but very little time. One moment, say we, is sufficient for conversion, and a true conversion though wrought in a moment is sufficient to save us. Beside the time of calling is long, it endures till death. This is as much as to say, that, when we have employed the best part of our days in our pleasures and sinful interests, we shall have time enough to repent and be saved. Never was any thing more false or deceitful than this idea of salvation. I grant, there needs only a good and sincere conversion in order to salvation. Provided it be good and sincere it cannot fail of being effectual. I own farther, that a true and sincere conversion at the last hour of life is not altogether unexampled. God shews us now and then one, to make us admire the marvels of his grace, and the depths of his electing love: but, granting all this, I beg you also to remark the following truths. First, True and sincere conversions in the last moments of life are so *rare*, that God has left us but one example in all scripture; and even that example is singular in its circumstances—

Paul in these words. In this chapter the apostle contemplates *three* objects—the Jewish religion—that of moral philosophy of the pagans—and the gospel, or that body of science, which was taught by Jesus Christ. He allows the gospel appeared scandalous to some Jews, and ridiculous to some Greeks, yet to others, *both Jews and*

*Greeks*, it seemed the power and the wisdom of God. The apostle tries the cause in dispute, pronounces in favour of the gospel, and adduces effects for proofs. The gospel of Christ is become to us both a system of knowledge and a source of holiness. *Christ is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption.*



cumstances, it is that of the converted thief. But, besides that nothing less than a cross, that is, a most infamous and cruel death, was necessary to affect him, there was needed also, to work this great miracle, the dying presence of the eternal son of God. It was in that grand action, in which our redeemer offered his eternal sacrifice for the whole world; in that action in which he caused the smoke of his oblation to ascend as it were from earth to heaven, in a sweet-smelling savour to God the father; in that action, in which the sun was eclipsed, the earth trembled, the graves opened, the vail of the temple was rent in twain; it was, I say, very just that the Saviour's blood should work such a miracle, and that the spirit of grace, to honour the death of the eternal son of God, should display his power in an extraordinary manner: but let no one imagine from this example, that it shall be so with him. Jesus Christ does not die every day, his blood was shed but once, and who told you that what he did in the act of his sacrifice, he will repeat again every day? (3)

## 2. Con-

(3) *The example of the thief on the cross.* The conversion of the thief on the cross is a credible historical fact: but, before we can apply this to the condition of any other person, we must ascertain the true nature of the fact, and from corresponding circumstances prove it a case in point. Now this is extremely difficult to do. Monsieur Tillemont has collected many various opinions concerning the penitent thief: but all

conjectures not supported by holy scripture are uncertain. Saurin states these historical conjectures, endeavours to prove that the two thieves were notorious criminals, who deserved to die, allows and demonstrates the truth of the conversion of one, and takes particular care to evince that nothing can be deducted from this man's conversion in favour of procrastinating.

“ If any thing (says he) seem

Y y 2

2. Conversion in the last hour is the most *difficult* thing in the world, the soul is as it were exhausted, without power, without light, without vigour; the heart is bound by a thousand old habits, long ago contracted, and which like so many chains prevent a freedom of action. The conscience has long been in a profound lethargy, all the doors of the soul are shut against ideas of piety, and these ideas like strangers know none of the avenues to the heart. In short the whole man is so sunk in stupidity, and so incorporated with the world (if I may venture to say so.) that the world is at it were converted into his own substance, and become essential to him. By what means then shall a man be brought out of such a miserable state? By what means then can he be detached from all the relations and connections, which he has formed with the world and its vanities? I know, God can do it, for nothing is impossible to him: but for this purpose there must be an extraordinary fund of grace, a singular effort of the omnipotence of God. If the Lord said, it was *easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than*

seem to invalidate what we have so often preached against the delay of your conversion, it is the example of the penitent thief. This is the intrenchment, from which the most obdurate sinners defy us to force them. I will tell you, my brethren, what there is comfortable in this example on your death-beds, should providence cause me to survive and attend any of you: but, while you are well, in this pulpit, to men, who take advantage of every thing to fortify themselves in corruption, it would be needless to attempt to prevent the devil's using the example of the *wicked thief* to hinder your labouring after conversion, because you have deferred it so long, we must endeavour now to prevent his using that of the *good thief* to engage you to defer the work still longer." Ser. *sur les deux Brigands, tom. i. ser. xi.*

than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven: how much more may we say so of an old rich man, of an old sinner, who has added to the obstacle of his riches thousands of vices, and crimes. (4)

3. I am

(4) *Conversion is difficult in a dying illness.* Saurin adopts Mr. Claude's just and necessary distinction on this subject and expatiates beautifully on it. He affirms, there is an ordinary, and there is an extraordinary way of converting a soul. The first is a rule to us: the last is always open to God, and his wisdom determines when to make use of it. "God has established laws in nature with the utmost wisdom, he has assigned a pavilion for the sun, fixed the earth upon pillars, and set bounds to the sea: yet sometimes he has been pleased to pass these laws, to shake the earth, to stop the sun, to divide the sea, and has discovered as much wisdom in violating the laws of nature as in establishing them. In like manner, religion has its laws, which wisely establish God's usual way of working: yet sometimes he has been pleased to dispense with these laws and extend their limits. Instead therefore of judging of the general laws of religion by particular examples, you ought to govern your ideas of particular examples by these general laws. Complaisant directors! Remiss casuists! Publick pests! who

amuse your penitents with deceitful hopes; when a physician has exhausted all the secrets of his art to restore the health of his patient, and sees they are unsuccessful, when every symptom of overloaded nature publishes the approach of death, he says, the case of his patient is desperate, he does not pretend, God cannot heal him, he does not even pretend to say, he has never seen a recovery in such a case, he speaks according to the ordinary course of nature, according to the maxims of his art, he speaks as a physician, not as a wonderworker. In like manner, when we see a man, who has persisted thirty, forty, fifty years in criminal habits, when we see such a man taken ill and despairing of life, weep, sigh, pray, and pretend to conversion, we say, his state is suspicious, and infinitely suspicious: but we speak according to the ordinary laws of religion, and do not mean to exclude miracles, we know, God is almighty, &c." *Sur le renvoi de conversion, tom. ii.*

This distinction is necessary to the understanding of many passages of scripture—to the discussion of many historical



3. I am not afraid to say, that the sin of those who defer their repentance, is of so *aggravated* a nature, that it renders them altogether unworthy of God's extraordinary aid to convert them. Such people are crafty deceivers, who act fraudulently with God, and pretend to dupe him with their artifices; for they do as much as say, God calls us, and, we acknowledge, repentance is just and necessary, if we mean to be saved; but in order to this we must quit our pleasures. What then shall we do to enjoy our delightful sins and yet avoid damnation? This is the way, we will be wiser than God; we will employ all our best days in debaucheries and sins, and so content ourselves with them; and when we are no longer good for any thing, we will be converted, and so prevent our damnation. Do you think, a reasoning so horrible, a procedure so detestable can be agreeable to God? Do you think it will extremely invite him to bestow extraordinary converting grace on such affronting wretches? No surely! What! because God is free in the dispensation of his grace, is there any likelihood that he will bestow it to establish and reward deceit? (5)

Con-

torical facts—and to the elucidation of many cases of conscience—all which may become sources of innumerable errors and vices, unless distinctions be made between ordinary and extraordinary—judicial and extra-judicial—intrinsic and extraneous. It is needless to give instances of each: they will occur to the least attention.

(5) *Will God bestow extraordinary grace to reward deceit!* Thus amplified by Saurin. “Strange reasoning! detestable sophism, my brethren! this is the highest pitch of corruption! this is ingratitude of a supreme degree! how ungrateful soever some people are, the worst shew a little sensibility in the instant of receiving favours; when they have forgotten them,

Consider, I intreat you, there cannot be a more foolish and rash design than that of putting off repentance to old age, since it takes for granted the most doubtful and uncertain thing in the world, which is that we shall *live* to a hoary old age. Is not this the grossest of all illusions? I omit urging what all the world knows, that no one can assure himself of the morrow. I say to you something more striking. Make the different orders of men pass before your eyes, count them one by one, and, it is certain, the number of those, who die before they are thirty years of age, is incomparably greater than of those, who come to that age. How many die between thirty and forty! how few arrive at fifty! fewer still live to sixty, and how very small in all ages and countries is the number of old men? In a city, which contains a million of souls, you will find two, or perhaps three thousand old people, that is, in the proportion of two or three hundred to every hundred thousand souls. (6)

Now,

them, indeed, they may become ungrateful: but behold! in this sinner's reasoning a new kind of outrage, a wicked art of inclosing within the circumference of his ingratitude the present and the future, favours received, and favours expected! In the perpetration of every crime I shall remind myself of mercy one day to be bestowed, and shall find in this idea a motive for firmness in rebellion, and boldness in sin. Is not this an excess of corruption? This is the most detestable ingratitude! &c." *Saur. renvoi, tom. ii.*

" Quid ergo, fratres? Cum nos multis peccatis et criminibus sentiamus obnoxios, numquid desperandum est? Absit hoc a populo Christiano. Non quidem desperandum est; sed nec in ipsis peccatis inimica securitate perseverandum. Qui enim dixit, cum conversus ingemueris, salvus eris: ipse dixit, nolite tardare converti ad Dominum, nec differatis de die in diem." *Cæsarii. serm. 102, in append. Aug. op. tom. v. p. 374.*

(6) *The vitality of old people is in the proportion of two or three hundred to every hundred*

Now, allowing this, what foolish security is it to imagine you shall be in the happy number of these two or three hundred, in a multitude of a hundred thousand! Were a man to hazard his fortune on such an uncertainty he would pass in the world for a madman, and all his relations and friends, his wife and children would pity and confine him: but thou! miserable wretch! dost thou hazard thy salvation, thy soul, the friendship of thy God, thine eternal happiness on this frivolous hope! and to complete thy misery, does thy wife, do thy children, thy friends, thy relations, do all the world let thee go on to do so! or, if they advise thee, dost thou pay no regard to their advice!

The second illusion, which beguiles multitudes, is an imagination, that they discharge their duty, when,

*and thousand.* This observation is not strictly *theological*: but it is pertinently introduced here, and may serve for an example of what our Dr. Gill recommended in an ordination sermon from 2 Tim. ii. 7. *Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in ALL things. Consider principally revealed truths: but, as all sciences may subserve religion, do not neglect the acquisition of human knowledge.*

This article belongs to *political arithmetick*, and writers on the doctrine of life-annuities treat of it with great perspicuity, and, in general, on solid principles. Mr. De Moivre—Dr. Halley—Sir William Petty—Arbuthnot—Davenant—King—Kerffe-

boom—and others have bestowed much laudable labour on this subject. The substance may be found in Postlethwaite's Dictionary, under the word ANNUITY.

There is a wonderful tendency in remarks of this kind to arouse and affect the bulk of ordinary hearers: but they ought to be made very seldom, and very soberly. It is not necessary for a preacher to investigate these articles with the accuracy of an annuitant; it is sufficient for him to have the *authority* of allowed judges for what he affirms, and it is enough for him to speak in general terms, as Mr. Claude does: "The proportion is of two or three hundred."



when, without concerning themselves about their own salvation, as the apostle commands, they employ themselves about that of *other* people. There are in general two ways of doing this. 1. By *saying* the finest things in the world about religion. Observe what passes in the world. You will hardly find one among many employed about his own conversion: yet every body will tell you, we ought to be good people—the corruption of the age we live in is prodigious—there is hardly any virtue or good faith—there is very little profession of practical religion, and almost no real godliness. These common-place-sayings are in the mouths of all: but, with all these fine speeches, you will rarely find one retiring from general views, seriously reflecting on himself, and saying What am I? Am I not like others? Since I allow, every one ought to correct himself, is it not just that I should begin with myself, put the first hand to the work, and set an example to my brethren! (7)

The second way of pretended concern about the salvation of others, without attending to your own, is still more scandalous than the first. It consists

(7) *Many bad men say fine things about religion.* The excellent Mr. Edwards, than whom no man hath written better on religious affections, says, “Fluent fervent abundant talking of religious subjects is no certain sign of truly gracious affections; for it *may* proceed from holy affections, and it *may not*. There are two extremes in this case.

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Some think a fulness of talk a just ground for suspecting the talker to be a Pharisee, an ostentatious hypocrite. Others rashly pronounce him, on the same account, an eminently pious man. The probability lies *against* the great talker in the opinions of Edwards—Shepard--Flavel--&c. See *Edwards on relig. affections* part 2. s. 3.

Z z

consists in being always on the watch to *censure* and slander the actions of others. If they be really blame-worthy, you will hear them exclaim against the crime, they will appear to be extremely offended, they will set them off with the blackest circumstances, and exaggerate them in every degree: but if the actions of others be apparently good and virtuous, not being able to condemn them in themselves, they will condemn them in their principles. It is only, say they, the effect of ambition or hypocrisy, they only want to make a parade, to be talked of, and raise their credit and reputation with good people. Certainly all these are very distant from St. Paul's meaning, when he says, *work out your own salvation*. I will not say, we should entirely neglect the salvation of our neighbours, God commands, and charity obliges us to attend to it, and it would be a very unworthy and wicked saying, should any, like Cain, cry out *Am I my brother's keeper*. However, I do affirm, it is not this only, which ought to employ us, it is not our first, and principal occupation; we must *begin* by working out our own salvation, to this we must particularly apply ourselves, lest while we correct others we become incorrigible ourselves. *I keep under my body*, says the apostle, *and bring it into subjection; lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be cast away*. (8)

But

(8) *Deluded people censure and slander others*. Mr. Claude considers slanderers, that execrable class of bad men, as trafficking in two sorts of commodities, actions and princi-

ples. First, they are collectors, carriers, wholesale and retail venders of all the improper *actions*, that are performed within their circle. Far from the christian disposition

But it is time to pass to the *second* part of this sermon, in which I require less the attention of your minds than the emotions of your hearts. I intreat you both simply to hear and judge of the truth and importance of what I say to you, and to act yourselves. May your consciences do what my tongue dictates, *work out your own salvation!* let us work at it now, without putting it off to another time, and let a just comment of these divine words be found to day in the exact obedience, which we render to them.

The first act, by which we must begin, is a holy *reconciliation to God*. For this purpose having cast our eyes on the greatness of the sins, which we have committed, and which we are perpetually committing against him, and having considered what favours we have received, and how shamefully we have abused them, having conceived a just grief for our innumerable sins, let us humbly have recourse

sition of pity, they take an infernal pleasure in propagating evil, and in aggravating it with a hundred false circumstances. Most congregations have one of these; (happy if they have but one!) he is generally a great *news-monger*, though he declares nobody hears so little news as he; a great dealer in *secrets*, though, good soul! nobody hates whispering so much as he does; he is excessively *busy*, though he never goes out of his way; he would be mistaken for one

of Samson's foxes, were we not to observe his total want of sense; he is, in a word, the Jack Ketch of the society, who executes all the criminals that fall into his hands. All this is wicked: but what shall we say of a wretch, who proceeds to censure the *principles* of good actions! No words can express the guilt of such a man. To him may truly be applied the words of a prophet, *In thee is found the blood of the souls of poor innocents.* Jer. ii. 34.

What king so strong,

Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue!

Z z z

Shakespear.



recourse to his mercy. (9) Let each of us in particular recall his wanderings from God, his transgressions

(9) *Having conceived a just grief for our . . . sins, let us . . . have recourse to mercy.*

This seems to have been the true original method of preaching. It is a state of facts; it is founded in the nature and fitness of things; and it has been that method, which the holy spirit has thought fit to seal and succeed in the hands of his ministers. Mere descriptions of sin affect, exhibiting its consequences affright, vehement censures of it alarm, reasoning concerning it opens the gloomy road to despair: but all this does not convert. On the other hand, preaching profusions of divine goodness without urging the guilt and misery of sin, does not answer the great end of preaching, the conversion of the soul. It is the union of both subjects, that possesses the sinner with a loathing of himself, and a love to God. I call this the *original* method. Thus S. Peter preached to the Jews, Acts ii. Thus S. Paul preached to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. xiv. &c. I call this a *stating of facts*, for it is strictly true—that errors and vice are in the world—that they are sources of misery to men, and reasons of punishment with God the judge of man-

kind—that God is a merciful parent as well as an equitable judge—that his goodness sent his son to bestow forgiveness, wisdom, and virtue as a benevolence—that these are set before unworthy men in the gospel—and that if they have any sense of duty, or any desire after felicity, they must fall in with this eligible plan of recovery. These are facts, and a good applicatory sermon only states them. I said, this method of address is founded in *the nature* and *fitness of things*. Presumption and despair are the two dangerous extremes, to which mankind are prone in religious concerns. Charging home sin precludes the first, proclaiming redemption prevents the last. I affirmed, the holy spirit had *succeeded* this method to the conversion of souls. Wickliff, Luther, Knox, Latimer, Gilpin, Bunyan, Livingstone, Franck, Blair, Elliot, Edwards, Whitfield, Tenent, and all, who have been eminently blessed to the revival of practical godliness, have constantly availed themselves of this method; and, prejudice apart, it is impossible to deny, that great and excellent moral effects have followed. See *Gillies' Success of the Gospel*.

gressions of his laws, how often, and how variously each has dishonoured his calling, with what negligence each has violated his natural and religious obligations, and particularly those, to which his Christian profession engaged him. Let the passionate remember the injustice of their angry transports. Let the covetous remember the many oblique ways they have taken to amass riches. Let the outrageous, the proud, the slanderous, the revengeful, remember the injuries they have done their neighbours. Let the worldly and voluptuous think of the many vain and rash desires they have had for earthly things. In one word, let each of us review his past conduct, let each weigh his actions in the balances of the sanctuary; and, acknowledging himself a transgressor, a disobedient and rebellious child, unworthy of the love of God, fall at the footstool of his mercy with profound humility. This is the act of repentance so pathetically expressed in the fifty-first psalm. *Have mercy upon me O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according to the multitudes of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* (1) This is the repentance, which  
the

(1) *Against thee, thee ONLY, have I sinned.* It is a ridiculous sense of this passage, which some have given. Kings, say they, when they sin, sin only against God, and are accountable only to him. Both these propositions are

false, and neither can be intended in the text. Kimchi, and after him several christian expositors take the words to signify, Thou, O God, only knowest my guilt in these transactions; no mortal is able to prove it.—Calovius, and

the church, afraid of the anger of God, expresses in the sixty-fourth of Isaiah. *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away; and there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us because of our iniquities.* (2) This is the repentance, which Jesus Christ proposes to us in the

and others say, Against thee chiefly have I sinned. I have injured Uriah, and am guilty on that account: but, great as that crime may be, it is not equal in enormity to the crime, that I have committed against thee. “From this topick, says Mr. Henry, Joseph fetched the great argument against sin, Gen. xxxix. 9. and David here the great aggravation of it.”

*Henry on the place.*

(2) *The church expresseth repentance in the sixty-fourth of Isaiah.* This chapter seems to be a prophetic description of the state of the Jews after the destruction of Jerusalem. The prophet speaks of a time, when the metropolis, the other cities, the temple, and all their pleasant things were laid waste. v. 10. 11.—It was after God had revealed by his spirit what men had not perceived since the beginning of the world. ver. 4. 1 Cor. ii. 9.—The prophet personates the bulk of his countrymen at the time

foreseen. *None calleth upon thy name, none stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* ver. 7. and therefore *we are all*, the whole nation, a few individuals excepted, are in the condition of a leper, and all our pharisees and scribes, and pretended good men, are in the state of menstruous women, we are in the state of a tree in autumn, and the punishment of our iniquities hath taken us away; we are excluded our religious privileges, and exposed to endless maladies. *Immundus, ut leprosus, seperatus a consortio hominum et Dei.—Justitiæ nostræ, Ego de personis potius quam de actibus locum intelligo.* Micah vi. 9. Wisdom, that is, the man of wisdom, &c. Prov. xiv. 1. Foolishness, that is, the foolish woman. Psal. cxx. 7. I peace, that is, I am a man of peace, &c. This form of speaking is equal to a superlative, *extremely foolish, exceedingly wicked, &c.*

*Poli Synopsis.*



the example of the prodigal son, in these tender words of confession, *Father! I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.* If our repentance brings us to the foot of God's tribunal, let it bring us there profoundly humbled; for *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* (3) Let it bring us there deeply affected, for a careless repentance is a treacherous repentance, betraying conscience by its fears, which are not only ineffectual, but even pernicious: just as the uncertain crises of diseases weaken instead of relieving nature. As our repentance, however sincere, avails nothing without a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, let us add a holy and fervent recourse to the blood of Jesus Christ, and to the satisfaction, which he presented to God the father on the cross. This is the faith, which is so often recommended to us in scripture, and to which the gospel is not afraid of joining the promises of eternal life. *If any man sin* (says St. John) *we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. We*  
*are*

(3) *God resisteth the proud.* James iv. 6. This is part of a difficult period of scripture, concerning which Mr. Claude gave his judgment in a letter to a lady, who had required it. "There are, says he, two difficulties in this passage. The first is, it is a seeming quotation in the fifth verse. But there is no particular quotation at all; S. James only speaks the general sense of scripture; and the words would be clearer read thus. verse 4. Ye adulterers, and adulteresses, know ye not that

the friendship of the world is enmity against God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Do ye think, the scripture speaketh in vain?—verse 5. The spirit, that dwelleth in us, striveth against envy.—verse 6. But he giveth more grace, &c. —The other difficulty is the connection of the fifth verse with the preceding verses: but this is difficult only to inattentive readers," &c.

*Oeuvres posthum. Let. 9. V. v.*

*are justified freely (says St. Paul) by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Through this redeemer God will be reconciled to us, and we shall find grace in his sight, when we present ourselves before him in communion with this great Saviour; for there is no other name given among men whereby we can be saved, his blood alone cleanseth from all sin. What joy, my brethren! to wash in this mystical Jordan! how happy shall we be, if we can lay our hands on the head of this holy victim, that in charging him we may discharge ourselves of all our crimes. Come unto me (says he) all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

As this peace with God is not made in a moment, there must be great efforts to bring our hearts into a state proper for such a reconciliation. Having, then, as well as we are able, collected our own sins before our eyes, let us make some reflections on the horrors of them. And *first*, let us well examine what we are by nature compared with the *great* God. A little handful of dust and ashes, a little earth kneaded together with blood, miserable little worms, a leaf carried away with the wind, a vapour which the sun exhales and dissipates. Are we not in comparison of God infinitely less than a drop of water to the ocean, or a grain of sand to the whole universe. We have a stature of five or six feet, a subsistence in the world of a few years, a life full of infirmities, a death perhaps sudden, but however so certain that neither reason nor observation can have the least doubt about it: and yet altogether miserable as we are, misery and nothingness itself, we have dared, or rather we have incessantly presumed to offend and insult the  
infinite

infinite majesty of our Creator and Lord! this vain shadow vaunts itself against the sun! this drop of water contends with the ocean! and this ridiculous grain of sand proudly elevates itself against the creator of the universe! Tell me, I intreat you, is there the least spark of reason in all this? Are we not always fools when we offend God? Is it possible to conceive a blindness equal to ours, when such mean vile creatures as we dare to violate the laws of the Lord of all? (4)

2. Does not our blindness appear yet more strange if to this we add the *power* of the God, whom we offend? I affirm, it would be folly and stupidity to rebel against him in consideration only of his infinite majesty, compared with our nothingness: yet if our offences could pass off with impunity, if our meanness could secure us from the strokes of his vengeance, our folly, however great, would only be considerable in itself, and not in its consequences; we should sin against the general dictates of right reason: but we should do nothing contrary to the particular voice of prudence. But it is far otherwise; for the God we offend is arbiter of the death and life of all mankind, the sole dispenser of adversity and prosperity, all creatures are under the laws of his providence, as a great army, which marches by his orders, and obeys all his commands; he has eternal prisons for the punishment of his adversaries; he has dreadful

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3 A

execu-

(4) *This grain of sand elevates itself against the creator of the universe.* Mr. Claude's design is to aggravate sin, or rather to *expose* its aggravation. He therefore contrasts the *meanness* of the offender

with the *majesty* of the offended. An excellent point of view, purely scriptural, and highly adapted to shake the conscience, and awake the criminal. See Job xxxviii. xxxix. xl. 4.

executioners of his justice, to whom he issues his orders, and into whose hands he delivers his criminals, to suffer such vengeance as he commands. All creatures follow his love and hatred, all live and smile on the objects of his favour, all frown at and destroy those, who incur his displeasure. He plants, he plucks up; he builds, he destroys; he kills, he makes alive; he raises, he abases; he comforts, he afflicts: and all the destinies of all creatures, their goods and their evils, from the greatest to the smallest things, from the throne to the dunghill, from the loss of life to the fall of one of our hairs, all depend on his will. What wildness then so frequently and cruelly to offend an almighty God, a righteous avenging God, who will *not justify the wicked*, who will *not hold the sinner guiltless*, and who has protested, *the wicked shall not stand in the judgment!* (5)

3. To this reflection another may be added, which will much contribute to discover the enormity of our sins. Consider how much we are indebted to God not only for his *patience* hitherto, but for that almost infinite number of *mercies*, which he has afforded us, and particularly for calling us to the profession of the *gospel*. I own,  
our

(5) *To the majesty add the power of God.* This is another just method of exposing the turpitude of sin. Omnipotence employed to make a sinner miserable, what a thought! What a dreadful thought! Mr. Claude places three passages in the close of this period in beautiful gradation. First, God will *not justify the wicked*, Exod. xxiii.

7. Next, God will not hold him *guiltless*, Exod. xx. 7. Last, God has protested he shall *not stand* in the judgment, Plal. i. 5. See Nahum i. where the prophet makes a noble use of the argument taken from divine power. *Jehovah is great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked.* Ver. 3.



our actions would be very punishable by the law of God, for God has given it to us, he has naturally engraven it on our hearts, and it is our duty to follow and obey it: but must it not be acknowledged, that we are infinitely more worthy of punishment, when to the voice of his law he has added that of his divine patience waiting long for our repentance? ( 6 ) What has prevented the Lord's executing his great vengeance on us? Why were we not destroyed the first moment we offended him? What then shall we say, when this patience shall reckon the days, months and years of its exercise towards us? What shall we have to answer when it shall accuse us, that instead of employing these days, months, and years to our conversion and sanctification, we have made no other use of them than to increase the number of our sins? But what will become of us when, after the voice of the law, and the complaints of patience, we shall find the favours and mercies of God rise up against us one after another, and all together join in a thousand reproaches of our ingratitude? It would be

3 A 2

enough

( 6 ) *Divine patience waiteth for our repentance.* Some ministers have been slow to use this topick, lest they should injure the doctrine of irresistible grace. We would beg attention to the following facts. First, it is certain, the inspired writers, whose orthodoxy cannot be doubted, used this style. *The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.* 1 Pet. iii. 20. *The Lord will wait that he may be gracious.* Isa. xxx. 18. Secondly, It is certain, the scriptures are not

written on principles of metaphysical accuracy: but they speak after the manner of men, according to general appearance and popular notions. Thirdly, We hazard nothing when we follow inspired guides: we risque every thing when we make unknown purposes rules of action. This argument, taken from divine patience, is a most affecting one, and has been applied to the noblest uses by ministers.

enough for each crime to appear in its own turpitude, it would be enough for all our sins together to appear in that horror, which their number gives them: but what must we say when there are a thousand sins in one; I mean when each sin is infinite in its nature? Besides our rebellions against the supreme authority of God, besides our extreme obstinacy and hardness against his patience, each sin is a particular outrage against all the favours we have received of God: and as his favours have been infinite, so each of our sins has contained an infinite number of outrages against the Lord. (7)

These three reflections may be followed by a fourth, on the indispensable necessity of a lively and profound repentance to reconcile us to God. Let us not flatter ourselves, the God we adore can never renounce his holiness. The love of good, and hatred of evil, are as natural and essential as his omnipotence and infinity. Yet must God renounce his holiness if he receive us into his favour without our renouncing sin. He would have communion

(7) *Sin is infinite in its nature.* To the infinite guilt of sin great objections have been made by many divines: but no objection, surely, can lie against the expression taken in the sober sense of our author. Three words shall suffice. 1. By the word *infinite* Mr. Claude means *innumerable*. 2. He affirms, every offence committed against God, is committed against innumerable *favours* bestowed on God's part, each of which is a reason of obedience. 3. He argues, Suppose a man at forty

years of age to have received a hundred thousand millions of favours from God, one sin against God includes a hundred thousand millions of *acts of ingratitude*; and, if he have received innumerable favours, each sin contains innumerable acts of ingratitude. If to this we add, that each excellence in God is a reason of obedience, that his excellencies are innumerable, and that sin is against all his excellencies, who can deny the *infinity* of sin!

munion with sin if he had communion with impenitent sinners. It is then as impossible to unite ourselves to God without repentance, as it is to unite life and death, light and darkness; as impossible as for God to deny himself, or to cease to be. Neither let us flatter ourselves about the quality of this repentance, for it is not a cold and careless repentance, it is not that, which consists in words only, it is not that, which passes lightly through the mind, and which hardly touches the heart. God requires a penitence, which pervades all the powers of the soul, which penetrates to the bottom of them all, which produces sighs, tears, and regrets, which is accompanied with a lively grief, a bitter sadness, not only for having exposed ourselves to punishment, but also for having offended the Lord, and so drawn down upon ourselves his just indignation. In one word, an habitual and powerful repentance, which breaks the mind and rends the heart, keeps us a long time in that state, and empowers us sincerely to return to righteousness and holiness. (8)

To

(8) *Repentance must be habitual.* How rational and scriptural is this kind of repentance, and how much to advantage the reformed churches appear, when the repentance prescribed in them is contrasted with the confessions, and penances, that are prescribed in the church of Rome! The following is a form used by our ancestors in the reign of King Edgar, about the year 967, the Saxon manuscript of which is in Bene't college, Cambridge.

“Lugenti animo pœni-

tens confessionem suam suo confessario humillime referat; et conquiniscens dicat suppliciter in hunc modum.

“Confiteor Deo omnipotenti et confessario meo spiritali medico omnia peccata, quæ malorum spirituum inquinamento unquam perpetravi; sive in facto, sive in cogitatione; sive cum masculis, sive cum fœminis; aliave creatura, sive secundum naturam, sive contra naturam.

“Confiteor engluviem ciborum et mane et vesperi.

To incline you more effectually to this repentance, let us (I beseech you) lift up our eyes to the  
mercy

Confiteor omnimodam avaritiam, et invidiam, et detractationem, et bilingue vitium, mendacitatem, et inanem jactantiam, et vaniloquium, prodigalitatem impiam, et cujusque generis fastum, qui effrenato huic corpori meo aliquantulum acciderit. Confiteor me frequentius fuisse peccati autorem, peccati fautorem, peccati conscium, et peccati doctorem.

“ Confiteor animo meo perpetratum homicidium, perjuriam, seditionem, superbiam, et neglectum preceptorum Dei. Confiteor omnia, quæ oculis unquam viderim vel concupiscendo, vel vituperando indebite; etiam omnia, quæ vel auribus audiverim vana et superflua, vel ore meo locutus fuerim.

“ Confiteor etiam corporis mei peccata omnia, cutis, carnis, ossium, et nervorum, renum, et cartilaginum, linguæ, et labiorum, faucium, dentium, et cæsariei, medullæ, et rei cujusque alterius, quæ vel mollis est, vel dura, humida, vel sicca.

“ Confiteor baptismum meum me pejus observasse quam Domino meo sum pollicitus, professionem-que, qua tenebar in Dei et sanctorum suorum laudem custodire, et in mei ipsius salutem eternam.

Confiteor me horas meas canonicas sæpius neglexisse, sæpiusque pejerans Domini vitam, et nomen ejus in vanum accepisse.

“ Rogo et obtestor Dominum meum pro his omnibus remissionem, ut in me nunquam ex insidiis prævaleat Diabolus, ne forte moriar absque confessione, et peccatorum meorum emendatione, sicut hodie confessus sum omnia mea peccata coram Domino nostro Salvatore Christo, qui cælum et terram moderatur et coram sacro isto altari, et reliquiis istis, et coram confessario meo, et domini missali sacerdote; et sicut puram edicti et veracem confessionem, et prompti sum animi corrigere omnia peccata mea, et qua possim sedulitate ea semper postea declinare.

“ Et tu Jesu Christe Salvator mi, misere animæ meæ, et remitte precor, deletoque peccata mea, et transgressionem meas, quæ vel olim, vel recentius unquam perpetravi, et ducas me in sublime regnum tuum, ut illic verſer cum electis et sanctis tuis absque fine, et in æternum. Nunc et te humiliter obsecro, Sacerdos Domini, ut tu mihi testis sis in die judicii, ut nullam in me potestatem habeat Diabolus, et ut tu apud Dominum



mercy of God, and to the blood of the covenant, which Jesus Christ hath shed for us. Let us not imagine, while we feel remorse for sin, that there is *no balm in Gilead*, no consolation in God : (9) doubtless

minum mihi sis caufidicus, ut peccata mea, et transgressiones commissas corrigam, et ab ejusmodi aliis committendis desistam. Ad hoc præstandum adjuvet me Dominus ille, qui vivit et regnat absque termino in æternum. Amen." *Spelman. Concil. Decret. Sc. Eccles. Brit. Canones dat. sub Edgardo Rege. p 459.*

*Habitual repentance.* Mr. Claude does not mean to *limit the Holy One of Israel*, Psal. lxxviii. 41. and to make a given length of time essential to true repentance : but he intends to inculcate the necessity of continued acts of piety. To hear some speak of conversion, one would suppose, it began in conviction of sin, which lasted a few days, or weeks, and was succeeded by an *assurance* of salvation, in which the convert is bound to continue, happen what will, the remaining part of his life. Faith, in this case, consists in believing you shall be saved, and to question this is unbelief, the great, yea the only sin. On the contrary, faith is the *belief of a truth*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. and repentance is *morrow* for sin. Belief grows with increasing evi-

dence, and repentance is repeated with the repetition of sin. Repeated acts constitute a habit, and thus repentance becomes habitual.

(9) *Balm in Gilead.* Jer. vii. 22. Gum--rosin--balsam--turpentine, &c. This text is one of those, which afford a rich variety of matter, convertible to various purposes, according to the genius and prudence of the preacher. Were a minister preaching on a Lord's-day during a fair, or to a trading company, or a factory, where would be the impropriety of his taking the *literal* meaning? His discourse would turn on the *natural* advantages of Judea—on their *artificial* improvements—on the advantages which they *derived* from commerce, and on those which they *communicated* to other nations—on the influence of their *religion* on trade, as containing the whole class of trade virtues in their system of morality—from all these he would derive arguments in proof of the truth of revelation against infidels, and exhortations to believers to imitate and excel the Jews, &c.

The same text on a fast-day might

doubtless there is, and were we such as we ought, we might *come with boldness to the throne of grace*, and be assured of *obtaining mercy and of finding grace to help in time of need*. Come now, says God by the prophet, *let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool*. And again, *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways and live?* This is the perpetual language of the gospel, this is the voice of the blood of Christ, these promises declare the remission of our sins, and the blood of Jesus Christ purifies our *consciences from dead works*. Let us then go with faith and hope to the *propitiatory*, which God in all ages ordained. (1) Let us go  
with

might be considered in connection with the *context*. Is there no hope of national prosperity in such and such a case? No. Should your vices bring on such a time as that described in this chapter, your case would be irremediable. Now then prevent it, &c. Here this sermon would turn on national vices, and divine temporal punishments.

The same passage has been often discussed in the sense of Mr. Claude. Is there no relief for a guilty conscience? There is none in the world. Is there any in the church? Yes. The death of Christ is the balm, the Spirit is the physician, the bible is the prescription. These familiar im-

ages facilitate the understanding of the subject, and for this reason many ministers delight to preach Christ by texts of this kind.

(1) *Let us go to the propitiatory*. Rom. iii. 25. So many expositors read the word. The sense seems to be contained in one or other of these propositions. God hath *fore-ordained* Christ a *propitiator*—God hath *foretold* the *propitiation* of Christ—God hath *foreshewed* Christ in the *Mosaic* *propitiatory*, or *mercy-seat*.

“*Whom God hath appointed to be a propitiation . . . for a demonstration of his righteousness.*” So *Worsley's New Testament* reads it.

“*Whom*

with humility to the grace, which calls us. Let us be reconciled to a God, who only seeks to do us good. We have lived long enough under disgrace, let us try to recover his peace, and with his peace the tranquillity and joy, which we have lost. Is it any pleasure to those, who desire to work out their salvation, to live a little longer at war with God? Are not the days of his anger days of desolation and mourning for us? Let us then seek his face and his favour, let us ask his blessing. *My heart said of thee, Seek my face. I will seek thy face, O Lord.* (2)

O!

“ Whom God hath set forth to be an atonement, as a sacrifice for sin, and the price of our redemption, to declare his justice in overlooking for so many ages the sins of mankind.” So *Adam* expounds it.—*Paraph. on xi. chapters of Romans.*

(2) *Seek my face.* Ps. xxvii.

8. Our translation interpolates, WHEN THOU SAIDST, *Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face Lord will I seek.* The French more literal. *Mon cœur me dit de par toi, Cherche ma face, Je chercherai ta face O Eternel.* The Latin and Greek bibles translate in much the same manner. The former, *Tibi dixit cor meum, quærite faciem meam; faciem tuam domine quæram.* The latter, σοι ειπεν η καρδια μου, &c. The literal meaning of the Hebrew seems to be, *My heart said to, or concern-*

*ing thee, Seek my face; Thy face, O Jehovah, I will seek.*

However, Calvin's comment justifies the interpolation in our text.—“ In dictione ὁ ambiguus potest esse sensus. Tantundem Hebræis valet ac Latinis, tibi. Sed quia litera servilis ὁ non raro pro de sumitur, non male vertetur, de te dixit cor meum: in quam partem major pars interpretum inclinat. Mihi tamen (ut ingenue loquar) magis probatur, notari mutuū prophetæ cum Deo colloquium. Dixi nuper fieri non posse ut quisquam fide assurgat ad deum quærendum, donec ejus invitatione patefactus fuerit aditus: quemadmodum etiam alibi ostendi prophetæ testimonio, dicam illis vos populus meus et illi vicissim mihi, tu deus noster. Zech. xiii.

9. Jam ergo David se hac clave januam sibi ad deum

O! how happy should we be, my brethren, could we see this gracious face of God, in which there is a *fulness of joy*, as the prophet speaks! (3)  
Should

quærendum fuisse apertam dicit, quia veluti Deo succinens, promissionem hanc in medium attulerit, et certe nisi hac præeunte symphonia, nemo invocationis chorum ducet. Simul ergo ac deum *se liberaliter nobis offerre audimus*, prompto animo respondeamus, Amen: Ejusque promissiones non secus reputemus nobiscum, ac si familiaris cum eo nobis sermo esset. Ita nihil opus est anxium artificium, et longas ambages quærere, quibus se fideles in Dei gratiam insinuent, quando hæc præfatio facilem illis viam sternit. Quantumvis indigni simus quos excipias Domine, mandatum tamen tuum quo accedere nos jubes, satis animi nobis facit. Vox ergo Dei in animis nostris, non secus atque echo in concavis locis, resonare debet, ut ex mutuo consentu emergat invocationis fiducia, &c."—*Calw. in loc.*

Our Pool, having given many opinions of others, adds, "The passage is imperfect, and should be supplied thus. Thou saidst, Seek my face. My heart hath revolved this command of thine, and repeated it under all my trials. I have made it the rule of my

past actions, and it is the ground of the following prayer." See a similar defect, 1 Kings xx. 33, 34.

(3) *There is a fulness of joy, as the prophet speaks.* Christian preachers differ very much in their methods of quoting scripture in public. Some always name chapter and verse; others never. It is a popular notion, that the quoting of chapter and verse fully proves a minister's intimate knowledge of scripture. I do not think so; I believe, on the contrary, if it prove any thing, it proves on the other side. A student of scripture does not suffer himself to attend to the figures, they would mislead him, divide his attention, and break the meaning. He reads on, as the authors wrote, and pursues, as we say, the thread of the argument.

Many learned men have justly lamented the present disposition of the Bible into chapters and verses. "There seem to me, says one, no conveniences in the division of the sacred books into chapters and verses, that can balance the inconvenience and prejudice they bring. . . The sections and pauses are improper.



Should we behold it, let us not imagine we are to stop there; the work then would be but half done;  
we

proper. . . The argument is mangled and broke off. . . There is not one chapter in the New Testament, that is not faultily divided. . . . 'The whole frame is cramped and disfigured by its odd disposition into chapters and verses.' &c. In proof of this, he observes, That Acts xxi. concludes with a comma—that the 1st verse of the vii. chapter of the 2d of Corinthians ought not to have been divided from the last verses of the vi chapter—that the last verse of vii of S. John should be the 1st of the viii.—&c. &c. —*Blackwall's Classics, vol. ii. part 2. chap. 1.*

Robert Stephens formerly, Worsley and others lately, have endeavoured to remedy this inconvenience by printing the New Testament as it was written. The utility of this method is manifest.

To return to the quotation of chapter and verse. It should seem, in *argumentative* preaching it is proper to quote texts for authority, and to name chapter and verse for the auditors to look, turn down, and examine leisurely: but in *applicatory* sermons, as in this of Mr. Claude, it seems most eligible to urge plain well known passages without naming the places;

at least, we have observed the ablest preachers prefer this method. When the same discourses are printed, it may answer a good end to throw chapter and verse into the margin. Figures in the text disfigure the print, and encumber the reader, especially if, in reading to others, he read them.

The New Testament writers use various methods.— Sometimes in particular, It is written in the *second* Psalm. Acts xiii. 33.— Sometimes in general, *Moses saith*, I will provoke you. *Esaias saith*, Lord, who hath believed? Rom. x. 19. 16. *God saith* in Hosea. Rom. ix.— Sometimes more general, *It is written*, I have made thee a father. . . What *saith the Scripture*? Rom. iv. 17. 3. It is written in the *Prophets*, Mark i. 2. *The Apostles* of the Lord *told you* there should be mockers, Jude 17, &c. I have heard a learned able minister preach an excellent sermon, which with great composure he began thus: "My text, brethren, is in the book of Psalms. I have forgot both the verse and the psalm. If I recollect them before I finish my discourse, I will inform you. I take pleasure in knowing that you can tell where to find

we must use all possible means to preserve an advantage so inestimable. In order to work out our own salvation we must indeed be reconciled to God, and we must also use means to maintain peace; for the one without the other would be nothing. To preserve this advantage then three things are necessary. 1st. Our faith must be kept and increased. 2d. We must live a holy christian life. 3d. Repentance must be familiarized; for, (such is our misery) whatever application we make to holiness, we shall always be committing many sins. I grant, these three things are not barely the practice of one day; and they demand much more application than we can make during the few remaining moments of this exercise. Let us, however, understand what we may do now, without deferring it any longer. We may without delay form good, and holy resolutions. (3)

1. In regard to the preservation and increase of our *faith*, as both depend on the frequent reading of holy scripture, and books of piety, on meditating

find them better than I can at present. The words are, *The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*

(3) *We may form good resolutions.* Some ministers exclaim bitterly against resolutions, and all the religion of some hearers is to sit and form them. Extremes are met with every where. The doctrine of resolutions is a very plain and easy subject. It is a virtue to make them, and

it is a sin to break them. Peter was not to blame for resolving to live and die with his master: his fault lay in starting from his engagement. It was a virtue in David to draw up a plan of holy living before he came to the kingdom, and to resolve to realize it. Psal. ci. Indeed, though the best may break their resolutions, and fall very short of their designs: yet they, who never so much as resolve to do well, will assuredly never do so.

tating on the divine mysteries, on assiduity in religious exercises, on attachment to prayer, and in fine on a holy remoteness from worldly things, as much as the duties of civil life will permit; let us form now this moment the design of carefully performing all these articles: I mean, of reading the book of God, of seriously meditating on its contents, of being assiduous and attentive in publick assemblies of worship, of praying to God as often as possible, and of shaking off as much as ever we can the thoughts and occupations of this present life. (4) To what can we better apply ourselves

(4) *Let us read the book of God.* St. Paul gave this advice to Timothy, *Give attendance to reading.* 1 Tim. iv. 13. There are two extremes. Some read a great deal: but never meditate. Aristippus considered these, very properly, as great eaters, who digest nothing. Mr. Claude advised one of this sort to read nothing for three or four years, as if he had said, (adds Bayle) *you have eaten enough; now digest.* On the other hand, some never read. This is absurd, if they profess a *written* religion.

There are *four* principal methods of reading the holy scriptures. 1. It is adopted by some as a proper part of *private* devotion. Were a young person to get by heart only one verse, a part of this private reading, every night or morning, it would in seven

years richly furnish his mind with scripture. In private the scripture should be studied. 2. *Family* reading requires skill. Some read a period only of eight or ten verses. Others such a period with an exposition, as Henry's, Guyse's, &c. Others read a chapter. Others again oblige each child, or servant, to read one. Circumstances determine the propriety of each mode of reading. 3. *Social* reading is profitable. There are, in many reading societies, and in all private meetings for prayer there ought to be, a good reader of scripture. It furnishes ideas and expressions to plain christians. 4. Some of our churches read the scriptures in *public* worship constantly, others on church-meeting days, fast-days, and other extraordinary times. The former seems to me not only a primitive:

ſelves than to read the ſcripture, that heavenly book, which contains in it treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge? and to which we may ſay, as the diſciples to the Lord, *thou haſt the words of eternal life*. How can we employ ourſelves better, when alone and free, than in converſing with the doctrines and precepts of religion, and endeavouring to know and comprehend them? We may truly ſay, when we apply to theſe things, *we are ſatisfied with the marrow of God's houſe, and drink of the river of his delights*. Where can we be happier than in the houſe of God, when we have opportunity? In hearing his word, in ſinging his praiſes, in a participation of the ſacraments, and in the reſt of the ſervices of his houſe we find a harveſt of conſolation, edification, and joy. What can we do better when in our houſes, than to watch againſt a too ſtrong attachment to worldly things, ſince the world is an abyſs, out of which, when we are once plunged, we cannot eaſily get. You are not ignorant how difficult it is to take care and manage your worldly affairs with innocence: but if that were poſſible, what is the world but trouble and torment? (5)

To

primitive: but an apoſtolic practice. *Cauſe this epiſtle to be read in the church of the Laodiceans.* Col. iv. 16. *I charge you that this epiſtle be read unto all the holy brethren.* 1 Theſ. v. 27. When our author's rule is thus obſerved, a people may be truly ſaid to be *nouriſhed up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine.* 1 Tim. iv. 6.

(5) *Where can we be happier than in the houſe of God?* The general neglect of public worſhip is an uſual topick of complaint. Miniſters lay the blame on the people, the people on the miniſters. Probably, the blame ought to be divided between both. The true ſecret of filling a place of worſhip is the art of making the place a ſeat of *pleaſure* and *happineſs*.



To these holy resolutions, let us add others, which concern holiness of life. Let us now this instant

happiness to the people. Some attention should be paid to the house, that hearers may hazard nothing in their health. Great heats and excessive colds, damps and dangerous draughts of air should be prevented. The assembly should be so disposed as be freed from the incommodiousness of crowding, and from the solitary pain of being placed where they become gazing stocks. The clatter of pattens, pew-opening, the clapping of doors, and all other rude noises should be banished. The worship itself should be so conducted as to interest all; zeal and prudence must direct it. The vile tubs, that we call pulpits, which bury a man alive, and betray him into a thousand unnatural gestures, often provoking the contempt of the people, should be exchanged for light, low and decent rostrums. Above all, the minister, who officiates, should excel in all office-qualifications, in modesty, zeal, humanity, energy, and so on. The horrid habit of sleeping in some is a source of infinite pain to others, and damps, more than any thing else, the vivacity of a preacher. Constant sleepers are public nuisances, and deserve to be whip-

ped out of a religious assembly, to which they are a constant disgrace. There are some, who have regularly attended a place of worship for seven years twice a day, and yet have not heard one whole sermon in all the time. These dreamers are a constant distress to their preachers, and, could sober reasoning operate on them, they would soon be reclaimed. In regard to their *health*; would any but a stupid man choose such a place to sleep in? In respect to their *character*, what can be said for him, who in his sleep makes mouths and wry faces, and exhibits strange postures, and sometimes snorts, starts and talks in his sleep, rendering himself ridiculous to the very children in the place? Where is his *prudence*, when he gives such occasion to malicious persons to suspect him of gluttony, drunkenness, laziness, and other usual causes of sleeping in the day-time? Where is his *breeding*? He ought to respect the company present; what an offensive rudeness to sit down and sleep before them! Above all, where is his *piety* and fear of God? There will come a time in the existence of this wretched drone, in which he will awake  
and

instant form the design of never doing any thing till we have first consulted conscience, to know what it permits, what it forbids, and what it ordains. I see many people, who appear to have the best intentions in the world, who would, as they say, live holily, and who for that purpose desire particular rules, precepts, and directions. I approve of these desires: but this we say on this earnest request of theirs for rules and precepts. Consult on every action the light and precepts of a good conscience, follow them in good faith, without violating, without warping, without entangling them with foreign views, and be assured, you will find therein the best and most certain of all directions. Let us resolve, my brethren, to acquit ourselves the best that we can of all our duties towards God, by a constant practice of piety; of all duties of justice and love towards our neighbour; and of all the duties of sobriety and temperance, that we may do nothing dishonourable to our nature or calling, nothing which does not comport with our heavenly original,

and find the Philistines punishing the idler, who was shorn in his sleep!

Ministers have tried a number of methods to rid our assemblies of this odious practice. Some have reasoned, some have spoke louder, some have whispered, some have threatened to name the sleeper, and have actually named him, some have cried fire, some have left off preaching, Dr. Young sat down and wept, Bishop Abbot took out his testament and read Greek.

Each of these awaked the auditors for the time: but the destruction of the *habit* belongs to the sleeper himself; and if neither reason nor religion can excite him, why, he must sleep on, I think, till death and judgment awake him!

I have thrown together here several seeming heterogeneous articles: but all with a view of shewing how Mr. Claude's good design of making a meeting-house a paradise is defeated.

original, and tend to the happiness, for which we are reserved.

Finally, as, while we are in this earthly state, we are constantly subject to falls, let us remember to have our eyes open also on this article. Let us not pass one day without examining what of this kind has happened to us, and having acknowledged our faults, let us not defer repenting of them till to-morrow. I own, repentance is not an agreeable thing, it is a grace, which is an enemy to depraved nature; she never visits us but to trouble our repose. Her approach makes us tremble, and her looks are fierce and threatening; but (besides that it is a necessary virtue as we have already said) (6) her first approaches only are hard and disagreeable, her first interviews only are sorrowful, for when she leaves us, or, to speak more properly, when she abides with us, she diffuses in our souls a thousand delights, a thousand consolations. We may apply to her what David says of God. *Clouds and darkness are round about her, righteousness and judgment*

(6) *We have already said; . . . repentance at first is disagreeable. See Vol. I. p. 110, 111, 112. The doctrine of repentance is highly proper to be urged in proof of that of religious feelings. A man in a state of sin is in a state of danger. Religion exposes this danger. Now it would be unnatural, were it possible, to discover one's self in a dangerous state, and not to feel pain on account of it. This pain is repentance. If it arise*

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from the mere apprehension of being lost, it is what our divines call *legal* repentance: If from a belief of the excellence of God, and from a tender concern for his glory, if this concern be accompanied with faith in the mediator, it is denominated *evangelical* repentance. Most converts begin with the first and proceed to the last; and in some the first mixes with the last all their days.

3 C

*judgment are the habitation of her throne.* The successive acts of her government are like the prophet's vision, when a burning fire and an impetuous wind were succeeded by a soft and tranquil sound, in which was heard the voice of God. (7)

Let

(7) *Darkness is round about repentance . . . righteousness is the habitation of HER throne.*

Our author here illustrates his subject by a figure of speech, and speaks of repentance *allegorically* as an empress mildly reigning over the soul of the penitent. In like manner he before considered avarice as a despotical governess, p. 81. Some have pretended, great mysteries were included in the sexes of graces, muses, virtues, and so on. The truth is, the words expressive of repentance, faith, avarice, and others in common use, are of the feminine gender in Latin, and therefore we say, in imitation of Roman eloquence, of repentance, *she* reigns—of a ship, *she* sails fast—of a church, *she* says so and so. Love is a gentleman, and hope is a lady, the moon is a lady, and the sun is a lord. We have often objected against this style, when it is used instead of *argument* in a discourse, where severe, rational, logical accuracy is requisite: but when it is employed to *illustrate* a subject, as here by our author, it is proper,

and tends to affect. Ecclesiastical writers should remember, that giving sex or gender to these subjects is essential to grammatical purity in Greek and Latin: but the same writings rendered into English, so as to express gender or sex, cease to be grammatical purity, and actually become either fine illustrations, or senseless absurdities. See *vol. i. page 397. note 7.*

*Repentance resembles the prophet's vision.* 1 Kings xix. 11, 12. *The Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains . . . and after the wind an earthquake . . . and after the earthquake a fire . . . and after the fire a still small voice.* There are three principal expositions of this vision. Grotius, and many others think, the Lord intended to teach Elijah a spirit of moderation, and to abate his vehement zeal. Others think, the wind represented Hazeel, the earthquake Jehu, and the fire Elisha. They ground this on verses 15, 16, 17. Mons. Roques takes the vision to be an answer to the plaintive prayer



Let us now pass to the third part. As this peace, which repentance works in us, is not a carnal security, a sinful lethargy, it is not contrary to every kind of fear, or, more properly, it is not only compatible with fear, but it is preserved only by means of fear. St. Paul, therefore, was not content with commanding us to *work out our own salvation*; but he adds, *with fear and trembling*; prescribing in these words, the manner of our conducting ourselves in the work of our salvation. On this, we have a few reflections to make before we finish this sermon.

First, then, you must refute a false sense of the apostle's words, that, by *fear and trembling*, he meant we should indulge the fear of a *slave* or an *enemy*, which would make us consider God as a judge always severe, and always angry, or as a hard master, who, let us do what we would, would always be dissatisfied with our services, who would only meditate evil, and seek every occasion of avenging himself on us, and who even sets snares to entangle us in perdition. Far from this being a christian virtue, it is certain, on the contrary, nothing is more pernicious to the creature, nothing more injurious to God, nothing more opposite to true piety. This fear, which is only proper to devils and damned spirits, is a perpetual source of inquietudes and agitations, and it can only in the  
end

prayer of the prophet, as if God had said, " True, the children of Israel have thrown down my altars, and slain my prophets, as you say: but do not imagine their crimes shall go unpunished, I have winds,

earthquakes, fires, and plagues in reserve for them, and I have also soft consolations for my prophets, and people among them." *Saur. Dissert. Tom. iii. Disc. x.*

end drive to madness and despair. What possibility is there of saving ourselves from the hands of the devil, if God is resolved on our destruction. Or what hope can we have of escaping punishment, if his natural properties incline him to hate and destroy us? Above all, what can be more injurious to God than such a thought? *As I live, saith the Lord himself, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* No, my brethren, God is not naturally an enemy to his own work. I grant he is just: and because he is just, I conceive, he will not always chastize us for our sins. Moreover, he has so much goodness and tenderness for us, that he freely opens a way for our return to his favour after all our offences, having, for this purpose, offered up his son a sacrifice for sin, and is now calling us to repentance. Besides all this, he has promised to treat us with the tenderness of a father, and to carry his love so far as to bear with our defects and weaknesses, the deficiencies of our repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. He has commanded us to put our confidence in his mercy, and to be persuaded, that *as a father pitieth his children, so will the Lord pity them that fear him.* Far from us be this servile fear, which is so incompatible with piety! Piety is nothing but a profound esteem, an infinite love for God: but how could we esteem and love him, if we imagined he was jealous of our happiness, and an enemy to our persons? (8)

In

(8) *Far from us be servile fear!* Mr. Claude reasons against slavish fear from seven

topicks. 1. From the nature of God; from his justice, goodness, &c.—2. From the testimony

In the second place, the fear in question is what is called *filial*, which not only agrees very well with confidence and love: but which is their perpetual associate. This fear inspires us with different emotions according to the different objects we meet with. 1. It impresses us with a profound respect and veneration always when we appear before God, a respect which arises from a consideration of his infinite majesty, the rays of which dazzle us; of the ineffable wisdom and glorious power, which shine in all his works; of his justice and holiness, and in one word, of all his perfections; so that we cannot consider them without diminishing in his presence, and acknowledging, that in comparison with him we are but dust and ashes.

2. When we remember the great privilege which God has granted us by declaring himself our father in Christ Jesus, it is not possible for us not to be under perpetual apprehensions of offending him, and of drawing upon ourselves, by our misconduct, the just effects of his indignation. The sight only of sin alarms us, and were we sure we never should commit it, the idea itself would be horrible enough to make us tremble; almost like a man who from the top of a high tower looks down a precipice, or like seeing on shore the abysses of the sea,

*testimony* of God; he hath said, he desireth not the death of a sinner.—3. From the *works* of God; he hath given his son to die.—4. From his *promises*; he hath promised to accept us, &c.—5. From his *command*; he hath commanded us to confide in his mercy.—6. From his *expostulations*;

he hath persuaded us, &c. In fine, from the *incompatibility* of servile fear, with piety and human felicity, which religion evidently tends to promote. These are substantial helps against despair, excellent in themselves, and well authenticated to us.

sea, the horrors of a tempest: for however safe we are, these objects will not fail to affright us. (9)

3. When we reflect on ourselves, and consider our natural inclinations prone to evil, and compare them with those good and holy dispositions, which grace has formed in us, it is impossible not to acknowledge, that all we have of good comes from God, that of ourselves we are incapable of the least good thing, and that *it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*. Now this produces that humility, which the Scripture calls sometimes *fear*, as in that famous passage to the Romans, *Be not high minded: but fear*; and in these admirable words of the second psalm, *Serve the Lord with fear, rejoice before him with trembling*. In both these places *fear* signifies *humility*. (1)

4. When

(9) *Filial fear agrees with love*. One of the finest notions, that can be formed of any one christian grace, is that of its *harmony* with all other christian graces. No general rule of describing a virtue will tend more towards preserving us from error than this. Hope lightens fear, and fear is ballast to hope. Faith keeps repentance from running into despair, and repentance keeps faith from rising to presumption. The *new man*, or that *set* of graces, which constitutes a christian, is, like the natural body, a beautiful composition of seemingly opposite materials formed into one uniform system, each part essential to the

whole, and the whole the glory of each part.

(1) *Fear signifies humility*. That is to say, fear is sometimes spoken of *metonymically*. The *fear* of Isaac, Gen. xxxi. 42. is the *God* whom Isaac feared.—I will mock when your *fear* cometh, Prov. i. 26. that is, when those *calamities* come, of which ye are afraid.—The *fear* of the Lord is clean, Psal. xix. 9. that is, the *law* of the Lord.—I will teach you the *fear* of the Lord, Psal. xxxiv. 11. that is, I will instruct you in the *worship* of God.—By the *fear* of the Lord are riches and honour, Prov. xxii. 4. that is by a course of *moral obedience*.



4. When we consider not only that state of natural corruption whence we were taken, but also the infirmities and weaknesses, which remain since our regeneration, and when we compare these with the numerous snares, which are set for us, with that formidable multitude of enemies, which attack our salvation, with the force and address, which they display to surprize and ensnare us: however intrepid we may be, it is not possible, if we sincerely intend to be saved, but we must fear making some false step, and consequently this will awaken all our diligence and caution to endeavour to guard against it; for, after all, there is no art, which our adversaries will not try to make us stumble, nor is there any sin, which we are not capable of committing. Which of us, however advanced he may be in piety, can answer for his own heart? This made Jesus Christ say to his disciples, *Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation; for the spirit is willing: but the flesh is weak.* (2)

## 5. Though

(2) *There is no sin, which we are not capable of committing.* Our author does not intend to contradict what he had elsewhere affirmed, concerning the impossibility of a good man's committing the sin against the Holy Ghost. He only means, that, were we wholly left to the natural depravity of our hearts, and were we denied the aids of the blessed Spirit (neither of which can come to pass according to Mr. Claude's system) we might proceed to the commission of every sin, and consequently of the unpardonable sin. The Calvinistick system is preferable to every other on this article, as it lays a solid ground of hope for every true believer, that he shall not so sin as to perish everlastingly. All other systems leave the unpardonable sin open to every christian: but this shuts the gulf, and so provides *strong consolation for the heirs of promise.* Heb. vi.

5. Though the grace of God, which supports us in temptations, be capable of preserving us, yet, should God suspend the influence of his grace, what advantages would not the flesh obtain over the spirit, as the falls of David and Peter too sufficiently teach us? This consideration should perpetually make us *fear and tremble*, for who can assure us, that there will be no moments in our lives, in which God will leave us a prey to the temptations of the world, and the occasions of sin? And should this happen, it would be the most deplorable and miserable state, into which a believer could fall. This is then a just subject of fear, which ought always to make us lift up our eyes and prayers to God, to beg him not to *lead us into temptation*, but to deliver us from the wiles of the enemy, and the evil tempers of our own hearts. (3)

In

vi. 17, 18. See the subject at large in Monsi. Claude's *Oeuvres posthumes*, Tom. iv. *Traite du peche contre Le S. Esprit*.

(3) *This is a just subject of fear*. We conclude this chapter by cursorily observing the peculiar turn of our author's applicatory sermons. To apply, in his sense, is to bring home to the conscience. In order to this his aim is to convince the *judgment*, that so the passions, which are excited, may be excited rationally and voluntarily. Now there are only two ways of doing this; either unknown truths must be stated and proved, or known allow-

ed truths must be urged. Mr. Claude wisely prefers the latter method, and composes applicatory sermons of the plainest simplest truths in the world, and like a true master in Israel exclaims, This is a *just* ground of hope—that is a *just* subject of fear, &c.

The following remark of the Archbishop of Cambray, may not improperly be applied to this method of preaching.

“ Some zealous preachers, under pretence of apostolical simplicity, do not effectually study either the doctrine of Scripture, or the powerful manner of persuasion that we are taught there. They imagine

In a word, there are *five* kinds of fear, in which we ought continually to be. A fear of *respect*,  
re-

gine that they need only bawl, and speak often of hell and the devil. Now without doubt a preacher ought to affect people by strong, and sometimes even by terrible images: but it is from the Scripture that he should learn to make powerful impressions. There he may clearly discover the way to make sermons plain and popular, without losing the force and dignity they ought always to have. For want of this knowledge a preacher oftentimes doth but stun and frighten people: so that they remember but few clear notions: and even the impressions of terror they received, are not lasting. This mistaken simplicity that some affect, is too often a cloak for ignorance: and at best it is such an unedifying manner of address, as cannot be acceptable either to God, or men. Nothing can excuse such homely preachers, but the sincerity of their intentions. They ought to have studied and meditated much upon the word of God, before they undertook to preach. A priest who understands the Scripture fully, and has the gift of speaking, supported by the authority of his function, and of a good life, might make

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excellent discourses without great preparation. For one speaks easily of such truths as make a clear and strong impression on his mind. Now above all things, such a subject as religion must furnish exalted thoughts: and excite the noblest sentiments: and this is the design of eloquence. But a preacher ought to speak to his audience, as a father would talk to his children, with an affectionate tenderness: and not like a declaimer, pronouncing an harangue, with stiffness, and an affected delicacy."—*Dialogues on Eloquence, dial. 3.*

The following rules for obtaining facility of speaking seem to me very just. "You are well versed, says the writer, in *literature*, and you have a due *sense and relish of religion* on your own soul; to these add the following rules.

"1. Do not content yourself with *general* knowledge: but endeavour to settle in your mind the genuine notion of all the doctrines and duties of religion. If you be thus *master of the subject*, you will be able to speak readily and distinctly on all occasions. Want of clearness of speaking generally ariseth from a defect of clear thinking.

3 D

"2. Be

remembering what we are in the eyes of that infinite Majesty, who sees us, and in the hands of the perpetual Providence, which governs us—A fear of *horror* in regard to sin, remembering that the greatest of evils is that of offending a good and merciful God, of whom we have received so many favours—A fear of *humility*, remembering that all we are, and all we have by grace, we hold not of ourselves, but God—A fear of *precaution*, remembering that *the just falleth seven times a day*, and that *if we say, We have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*—A fear of *attachment* to God, saying to him with the prophet, *For sake me not, O Lord, O my God, be not far from me*. In this manner let us work out our own salvation, and God, beholding his talents multiply in our hands, will increase their number by adding blessing upon blessing, till at length he will change grace into glory, and give us the entire and perfect enjoyment of his everlasting inheritance.

“ 2. *Be much in the study of the Scriptures*; this will furnish you with *matter*, and it will give your *style* a tincture, that will render it more acceptable to the pious.

“ 3. *Converse with the writings of those practical, pressing, awakening divines, who speak most naturally to*

the souls of men. Here you will acquire the best sort of pulpit-eloquence.

“ 4. *Preach constantly*. Frequency will render the work easy to be performed by yourself, and what is so will be more easy to be understood by the hearers.”—*Glanvil's Essay on Preaching, part 1.*



## C H A P. VIII.

## Of Texts to be discussed in Propositions.

**T**O these three, a fourth may be added, which consists in reducing the texts to a number of propositions, two at least, and three or four at most, having mutual dependence, and connection. Thus for example, Rom. viii. 13. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die : but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* You may, without pretending to explain the terms, *flesh—spirit—death—life*, or the phrases, *live after the flesh—mortify the deeds of the body*—(which is the usual method.) you may reduce the whole to two *propositions*; the one, that the damnation of sinners is inevitable—and the other, that a good and holy life is both a principal end of the gospel, and an inseparable character of christianity. When this method is taken, there is much more liberty than in the former, and a more extensive field opens. In the former methods you are restrained to your *text*, and you can only explain, and apply that; you can make no other observations, than such as precisely belong to it: but here your subject is the matter contained in your *propositions*, and you may treat of them thoroughly, and extend

them as far as you please, provided you do not violate the general rules of a sermon. Here you must propose not to treat of the text, but of those *subjects*, which you have chosen from several contained in the text. The way of explication is most proper to give the meaning of Scripture; and this of systematical divinity. (1) The way of application rather regards practice than theory: but this, which we call the way of propositions, or points, is more proper to produce an acquaintance with

(1) *Systematical divinity.* Some writers have exclaimed bitterly against systems of divinity, others have exaggerated the utility of them. Perhaps the truth may be, neither side has taken sufficient pains to understand the other. Theology reduced to a system is nothing more than a regular arrangement of what we hold for religion, and there can be no damage done by such orderly dispositions of truths: on the contrary, much benefit arises to a student of divinity by them, for a system is as advantageous to a minister, as a regular set of books to a merchant. A minister's fancy is a kind of waste book, his system is a sort of ledger. There are many ways of abusing systems, and these abuses have given just ground of complaint. If human systems be made standards of orthodoxy, if they be imposed on ministers, if they be given not to

be examined, but only to be defended, if they take a place, which belongs to the sacred Scriptures, if assent to them be a ground of possessing civil and ecclesiastical benefits, then indeed they deserve all that has been said against them.

System is defined a scheme, which unites many things in order, and reduces them to regular dependence; and the following remarks seem just. "A regular order is required in the general arrangement of a system of divinity, and a connection is to be preserved in the several matters that form it—the definitions should be just—the divisions exact—the arguments solid—the proofs clear—the citations conclusive—the examples striking—the terms of each thesis are to be explained at the beginning—from each definition certain axioms are to be drawn—from thence pro-

with systematical divinity, and it will equally serve theory and practice. (2)

For

propositions are to be formed —which are to be illustrated by scholia, and proper reasoning.”—*Elements of Universal Erudition, by Baron Bielfeld, vol. i. book 1. chap. 1. §. 5.*

(2) *Propositions.* This rule is beautifully exemplified by Saurin in his sermon on Christ’s divinity. “The doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ (says he) we ground on three *propositions*. 1st, Jesus Christ is supremely adorable, and supremely adored by beings the most worthy of our imitation. 2dly, It implies a contradiction to say, that God communicates the honours of supreme adoration to a simple creature. 3dly, Our ideas of this subject are perfectly conformable to those of the ages, in which orthodoxy is best established, and least suspected.” The text is Rev. v. 11, 12, 13, 14. and the sermon a full answer to all that can be objected against the doctrine. *Saur. ser. tom. ii. ser. 4.*

Massillon abounds in this method; but seldom mentions them in form: a single proposition is the ground of the sermon, and its proof, the parts. Thus, in a sermon on indifference in religion.

“Lukewarmness is a certain prelude of a fall. 1st, Because special aids are necessary to perseverance in grace; but they are not afforded in this state. 2dly, Because the passions, which draw us away, strengthen in this state. 3dly, Because all external helps to piety become useless in such a state.” *Ser. Car. tom. iv. pour le jeudi de la 3<sup>e</sup> sem.* Sometimes three propositions are the three parts of his sermon. Thus, on “Mat. viii. 10. 1st, Religion is reasonable. 2dly, Religion is glorious. 3dly, Religion is necessary. *Ser. Car. tom. i. pour le jeudi apres les cendres.*

So again, “1 Cor. ii. 7, 8. 1st, A suffering God renders humiliations honourable. 2d, A God carrying our griefs renders sufferings amiable. 3d. A God united to man confounds reason, and renders even faith reasonable.” *Myster. pour l’incarnation.*

Mr. Superville, from Mat. xxii. 41. 46. extracts three propositions, which he calls three *leçons*. 1st, “Two truths may be certain, and worthy of all acceptance, though we know not how to make them agree together. Christ was David’s son, and David’s Lord. 2d, There always were obscurities

For example, let us take the text just now quoted. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die ;*  
*but*

obscurities in revelation, nor is it possible, or fit that it should be otherwise. 3dly, Pride, and indocility, are vices so odious to the Lord, that they provoke him to leave in ignorance those, who, being altogether blind, boast arrogantly of their knowledge." *Ser. sur les obscur. de la revel. tom. i.*

Mr Saurin, in a sermon on Eccles. vii. 29. lays down seven propositions, which he calls *maxims*. " 1. A miserable being ought to endeavour to diminish his miseries, instead of labouring to increase them. 2. Not to attend to evils, which cannot be healed but by attention, is to perpetuate, and aggravate them. 3. Every system of happiness, which has no relation, or only a distant one, to the perfection of the faculties, and the condition of the being, that it would render happy, is a false system, at least it is an incomplete system of happiness. 4. A good, of which the world has high notions : but which we know by reason, by feeling, by experience, by all the kinds of proofs, that the subject will admit of, is incapable of making us happy, is not a good in regard to us. 5. To float

in uncertainty on the most interesting questions, and not to collect all one's attention, not to suspend all one's occupations in endeavouring to clear these questions, to banish doubt, and acquire certainty, is to act contrary to our true interests. 6. The greatness of an object makes up for its uncertainty ; or, to express myself more clearly, a great good, if it be possible, and probable, though uncertain, merits the sacrifice of a small good, though present, and certain : and a great evil, though distant, and uncertain, merits, in order to avoid it, an exposure to a small evil present, and certain. Finally, a conduct, which we are sure of repenting, is an unreasonable conduct. These maxims (adds he) are so generally received in the world, that according to our violation, or practice of them, we are reputed as more or less distant from wisdom, or folly ; and when we have violated them to a certain degree, we are generally regarded as madmen. We are going to prove, that sinners in the plans of happiness, which they form to themselves, violate all these maxims." *Saur. ser. tom. iv. s. 10. sur le travers, &c.*

*Propositions*



*but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* After saying in a few words, that by those, who *live after the flesh*, the apostle means the worldly, and wicked, such as are governed by worldly interests, and carnal passions; and that by the *death*, with which he threatens them, he means eternal damnation; and that, on the contrary, by *life*, he intends that eternal salvation, and heavenly glory, which the gospel promises; and that, by the *mortification of the deeds of the body*, of which he speaks, and of which he says the holy spirit is the author, he intends an holy life, spent in the exercise of virtues, and practice of good works; after briefly saying this, reduce the whole discourse to two propositions, first, The damnation of the wicked is inevitable.—Secondly, The practice of good works, and an holy and religious life is the principal end proposed in the gospel, and a principal character of a true christian. (3)

You

*Propositions or points.* Our author uses these terms synonymously; our English divines take the latter in a far more vague and equivocal meaning.—“The death of Christ is the foundation of the spirit of life; to unfold this *point* therefore, because it is a *special point*.”—“For the understanding of this comfortable *point*”—*Sibbs*.——“The *point* to be considered is the expediency of a divine revelation. Common reason will lead us to acknowledge the being of a God—will give

us some notions of his *power, wisdom, justice, and goodness*,—will suggest to us the belief of a *providence*—will teach us the relation in which we stand to God as *creatures*—our obligations to *worship* and *obey* him in the general—the duties of *justice, charity, and temperance* in the more obvious instances, and lastly, that we *deserve* to suffer, as often as we deviate from the known rules of duty. These *points* cannot be disputed,” &c. *Conybeare*.

(3) *If ye live after the flesh ye*

You may enter on the first proposition, by observing, that it is deplorable to consider the blindness

*ye shall die.* How different is the sketch struck out by our disinterested author from that, which formed the plan of a sermon on a similar passage by one of the intolerant bishops of Charles II! I am sorry to say, it was the *last* sermon, that Laney, Bp. of Ely, preached before his majesty; for, however men live, one would wish to see them *die* in a christian temper. This sermon is entitled *Of comprehension*, that is to say, gentle reader, the opinion of Bp. Laney and his faction on the generous, liberal scheme of some great and good patriots for so modelling the established church as to comprehend the non-conformists. The style of this sermon is low and vulgar, the spirit of it is fiery and intolerant, and the whole design of it is to establish the hierarchy on the ruins of non-conformity. The text is Gal. vi. 7, 8. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he, that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he, that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.* A spice of this man's perversion of the sacred oracles of God will be sufficient to

excite in us a just dislike of the whole art. " St. Paul exhorts him, *that is taught in the word, to communicate to him, that teacheth, in all good things.* If there be any coherence in the discourse, any reason in the *rational* particle *for*, the communicating our goods for the gospel is *true sowing to the spirit.* Our worldly goods by nature and kind are carnal, yet being *sown to the spirit* [that is to say, lands being settled on the church of England] become spiritual, they are enfranchised and incorporate into the family and retinue of the spirit, they alter their property by giving the respect that persons of low birth have, when they are adopted or affianced into a more noble stock. When the flesh serves the spirit, it is advanced above her condition, the volatile nature of the flesh is fixed by the spirit, and helps to make up the *title to life everlasting.*

" It is reported, from a house of Chloe, that . . . a church shall be contrived, that will give room and liberty to them all. . . . It is to be called a comprehensive church . . . though I think it might better be called a *drag-net.* . . . It is a Trojan horse, with

ness, in which the greatest part of the people in the world live, who seldom think of the punishments of hell, or the consequences of death. You may remark, that from this blindness comes their insensibility to religion, and their extreme attachment to the vanities of this present world; for it would be impossible for them not to endeavour to avoid the eternal torments, which await sinners after this life, were they well persuaded of the truth of them, as nature itself would lead them to this, and self-love would reduce knowledge to practice. Yet you may add, that, however great this blindness is, it is, in a measure, affected, and voluntary, proceeding more from the malice of the heart, than the darkness of the understanding; for the passions avoid those objects, which are disagreeable to them, and perpetually substitute others to employ the mind. Whence it may be concluded, that it is of the last importance to meditate on this matter, on which depends the justice, or injustice of our life, the good, or bad state of our death, and our eternal interest in a future world.

Having this prepared the people's minds, enter into the matter more particularly, and, above all things, take care to establish the truth, and evidence

with a *comprehensive belly*. . .  
It is desired for what governs  
all the world, *gain* and *profit*.  
... but it is the greatest  
dishonour that can be to the  
spirit to make it serve for  
*compost* only to lay in the field  
of the flesh." In plain En-  
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glish, it was supposed by a  
junto, at the house of one of  
the king's Chloes, that the  
removal of penal laws for  
conscience sake would open  
church-preferments to the  
non-cons. Gloriously said,  
and like a Stuartine bishop!

dence of your proposition (4) by observing, first that *Man is a creature subject to a law*, that even the light of his conscience discovers an essential difference between vice, and virtue, good actions, and bad, that thence come the emotions of conscience, and the judgments we make of one another's actions, approving or condemning them; for this necessarily proves, that there is a common rule by which, we acknowledge, all men ought to live; and this is a truth so natural to all men, that the wickedest of all, who endeavour to elude its application to themselves, do however acknowledge it, when proposed in general, and applied to other subjects. (5) If there be a law common to all men,

(4) *Above all things take care to render the truth of your proposition evident.* We have before observed, that the *pungency* of a sermon lies in the *truth* of the doctrines, that compose it. Vol. ii. page 274. To which we beg leave to add, the truth of a doctrine must be made *apparent*, or it cannot produce its effect. Some truths in learned sciences admit of only learned demonstrations; they are the same to the lower class of mankind therefore as errors, for they cannot comprehend the arguments that establish them: but theology is not a science of this kind, it admits of popular proof, and this is its glory. A good judge has well said, "The whole art of evangelical popular per-

suasion lies in an ability of blending the hard with the easy, the obscure with the obvious, so that the learned may not be nauseated with vulgarisms, nor the populace perplexed with sophisms."—*Eman. Thes. de argut. cap. xviii.*

(5) *There is a rule, by which all men ought to live. . . The most wicked allow it.* That is, the most wicked are obliged to allow it, if they reason consequentially. Mr. Hobbes supposed, "That the decisions of the civil magistrate were to be the *rule* of morality, and that the very *obligations* of duty could be founded only in his will." To which a divine well replied, "What if the magistrate himself should be under



men, there must be a Supreme Judge, before whose tribunal they must appear to give an account of their actions; and if there be a supreme tribunal to judge them, it necessarily follows, that there are punishments ordained for the transgressors of this common law. Law, Judge, Punishment, are three things, which reason and nature have joined together in indissoluble bonds. A law is no law if it does not suppose a judgment, and judgment is no judgment if it does not suppose punishment: but if these three things be inseparable from each other, they are also from a fourth, the nature of man, and dignity of his condition as he is a reasonable creature, reason being only a principle of good or evil, or, if you please, a power which renders

*a mistake?*—Should either refuse to establish any scheme of *virtue* at all?—Or choose an *imperfect* one?—Or, having once made a right choice, through levity of temper *change* it?—Those, who are incapable of being influenced to a virtuous life in any other way than this, must be left in very *uncertain* condition.”—

*Dr. Conybeare's Sermon on the Expediency of a Divine Revelation.* 1729.

“ There are, says Bayle, laws of reasoning independent on the will of man. Rules of reasoning are not therefore just and true, because men have thought proper to throw them into syllogistical form; they are just in themselves. Sophisms may

violate these rules: but they cannot free themselves from these criteria. As there are immutable laws for the operations of the judgment, so there are similar laws for acts of volition. These are not arbitrary, they are natural and necessary, and lay us under indispensable obligations; and as it is inaccurate to reason contrary to the fixed laws of syllogism, so it is unjust to will any thing not conformable to fixed laws of volition. There is in virtue a natural and interior fitness, and in vice a similar unfitness and injustice, so that virtue and vice are two kinds of qualities naturally and morally different.”—*Baile Penſees.*

ders us capable of good and evil, in opposition to brute beasts, not naturally made capable of either vice or virtue. It must therefore be owned, that we are subject to a law, a law relates to a judge, a judge to a dispensation of punishments, so that these four things, reason, law, judgment and punishment, are truths of incontestible evidence, nor can any one be denied without destroying them all. (6)

Now from all this it appears how pernicious this wilful blindness is, which makes the wicked deny the pains of hell; for thereby they turn themselves into brute beasts, and, openly professing to deny their own reason, they degrade themselves below that admirable dignity of their nature, which places them above all other animals.

Having thus established your proposition by reason, you may establish it by the *consent of all mankind*; for in the thickest darkness of paganism, when, as the Scripture says, *God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*, even then, it was always acknowledged, that as there was a reward proposed to

(6) *Reason, law, judgment and punishment . . . are connected together.* Our excellent Dr. Sam. Clarke has placed these articles in the clearest light, and proved their connection in the most masterly and conclusive manner. "Though eternal moral obligations are incumbent indeed on all rational creatures, antecedent to any respect of particular reward or punishment, yet they must certainly and necessarily be attended

with rewards and punishments; because the same reasons, which prove God himself to be necessarily just and good . . . prove also that he cannot but be *pleased with* and approve such creatures as imitate and obey him . . . and *displeased with* such as act contrary . . . and, consequently, that he cannot but some way or other *make a suitable difference* in his dealings with them." &c.—*Demonstrat. of Being and Attributes of God.*

to the just, and virtuous, so there were also punishments determined for the unjust and impious. I own, when the pagans philosophized on these punishments, they almost all said chimerical, and unreasonable things, yet, allowing this, they were not far from this general idea, that there must necessarily be a punishment annexed to vice. (7)

This

(7) *Prove your doctrine by affirming the consent of all mankind.* Universal consent has been disputed as a *fact*, and denied as an *argument*: yet we have great authority for the truth of the fact, and strong reasons to retain the argument. We will collect both in this note from divines, historians, philosophers and travellers of great judgment and approved fidelity.

“ It is objected (says Mr. Saurin) that what is considered as a crime by one nation is regarded as a virtue by another, notions therefore of virtue and vice are arbitrary. But if one nation respects as a virtue what another detests as a vice, I conclude, that it is because they both agree in this general proposition, that virtue is preferable to vice, and justice to injustice. One nation maintains that a child’s love to his father must incline him to succour his father to the last extremities of his life, and carefully to guard, and if possible lengthen the life of a person so dear to him. An-

other nation maintains that a child’s love to his father should engage him to eat his father, when arrived at a certain age, that he may deliver him from the infirmities of old age, and the anguish of a slow death, and that he may give in his own bowels a refuge to him, who carried him in his. But both these nations agree, that children should love their parents. Love to parents, then, is unanimously considered as a virtue. If then universal agreement be a conclusive argument, it concludes for our system.”—*Saur. Ser. sur le travers de l’esprit humain.* tom. iv.

If *universal consent* be a conclusive argument, says Mr. Saurin. —I conceive what Mr. Locke says of the *universal consent* of mankind concerning the being of God, may be applied to future punishments. His words are these: “ I think that the *universal consent* of mankind, as to the being of a God, amounts to thus much: That

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This may be further proved by the *principle of all religions*. There never was, nor can there ever be

the vastly greater majority of mankind have, in all ages of the world, actually believed a God; that the majority of the remaining part have not actually disbelieved it; and consequently those, who have actually opposed the belief of a God, have truly been very few; so that comparing those, that have actually disbelieved, with those, who have actually believed a God, their number is so inconsiderable, that in respect of this incomparably greater majority of those who have owned the belief of a God, it may be said to be the *universal consent* of mankind."—*Essay*, b. i. c. 4. f. 8. note.

An approved historian affirms, "In every people we discover a reverence, and awe of the Divine Being; an homage paid to him, and an open profession of an entire dependance upon him in all their undertakings and necessities, in all their adversities and dangers. Incapable of themselves to penetrate futurity, and to ascertain events in their own favour, we find them intent upon consulting the divinity by oracles, and by other methods of a like nature, and to merit his protection by prayers, vows, and

offerings."—*Rollin's Anc. Hist.* b. x. c. 3.

A modern traveller says, "The savages of Canada think that the country of souls is very far westward, that they have great difficulties to surmount, and great dangers to run through before they arrive there. They speak of a river they have to pass, where many have been wrecked; of a dog, from which they find it hard to defend themselves; of a place of torment, where they expiate their faults; of another where the souls are tormented of the prisoners of war that have been burnt."—*Charlevoix's Voyage to Canada*, letter 23.

I cannot help observing, that all ancient and modern accounts concerning pagan ignorance of God, future rewards and punishments, &c. do not in the least disprove Mr. Locke's assertion, "That we have *no innate ideas*," as a late reverend author, methinks, rather too hastily concluded. Perhaps they prove thus much, That the evidence of these truths is so clear, that a moderate use of our faculties will perceive it. See an instance of this in *Crantz's Hist. of Greenland*, vol. i. p. 197.

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be any, which is not founded on this principle, that God is our sovereign judge, who holds in his hands our life and death; this made a profane writer say, Fear made Gods; meaning that from this source all religions generally proceeded.

Finally, you may proceed to *revelation*, and observe, that revealed religion has carefully placed this truth in full evidence. You may establish this by reciting some principal texts of Scripture, which expressly speak of the damnation of sinners. Such texts are not difficult to find. (8) The *truth* of the punishment being thus proved, go on to the *degree* of it, which is very important, and will make a deep impression. You may say, 1st. That this punishment must not be in this life only, but after death; the reason is plain, it is a punishment which must *follow* the judgment, for the judgment cannot be till life is ended, as the course of life we pursue must be finished, before the decree can be pronounced to acquit, or condemn us. It must  
not

ως επι το πλειστον και μη θελωσι  
τοις πασι συμφωνηται επι τας  
αρχας των ολων παραγινομενοις.  
Quum igitur deum esse unum,  
plerique omnes ut plurimum  
vel inviti consentiant, ubi ad  
universorum principia appli-  
caverint.—*Athenag. Apol.*

(8) *Texts, that speak of the damnation of sinners, are not difficult to find.* The notion advanced by some, that the Old Testament speaks of only *temporal* rewards and punishments, would make a considerable difference in our bodies of divinity, if it were

well founded. Our divines, ancient and modern, teach the doctrine of future punishments, and confirm it by a multitude of passages in both Testaments, for which, we think, they have the best authority. However, when this doctrine is to be established in a *sermon*, it should seem most eligible to quote undisputed New-Testament texts; for as there can be no necessity for quoting many, it would be imprudent to omit those, which prove most and quick-  
est.

not then be imagined, that the punishment, of which we speak, consists in the afflictions of this life only. 2d. It must be a punishment, which involves both soul and body, for, as both have joined in the practice of vice, both must also partake of the punishment; whence it follows, that the punishment can neither be temporal death, which does not affect the soul, nor the inquietudes, and agitations of conscience, which do not affect the body. 3d. It must be a real punishment, that is, something which has truly the essence of pain, and actually relates to the justice of God, whence it follows that it cannot consist (as some pretend) in the annihilation of body and soul; for divine justice demands an eternal pain, which glorifies it, and consequently which does not destroy its subject, but continues its subsistence for a perpetual monument of God's hatred to sin. 4th. It must be a punishment proportional in greatness, as well as in duration—to the greatness of the judge who ordains it, the tribunal which decrees it, and the almighty hand which executes it. Here a strong and pathetical description may be made of the greatness of the punishments of the damned. (9)

Having

(9) *Describe pathetically the punishments of the damned.*—

Some preachers, (says Saurin) under pretence that the doctrine of eternal punishments has thrown some weak people into doubts about the divine perfections, have thought it their duty to remove that stumbling-block, by presuming that the idea, which Scripture gives of eternal punish-

ments, is only intended to terrify sinners; they think it allowable to suppose, that in the end God will relax the rigour of them: but if the design of God in denouncing the punishments of hell was only to terrify the impenitent, would it become us to oppose his wise designs, and with our profane hands pull down the dams, with which

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Having thus established the truth of our proposition, and treated of the degrees of punishments, we may pass on to the vain *subterfuges*, which sinners use on the subject. 1st, It is a distressing subject, therefore they do not like to think about it. You may observe the folly of this conduct, for their condemnation is not the less certain for their forgetting it. They resemble prisoners, already in irons, and doomed to punishment, who stifle the sense of their misery by plunging into debauchery. They resemble the old world, who were *eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage*, as the scripture says, and suddenly, when they least of all thought of it, *the flood came and took them all away*. They cry *peace, peace*, while destruction advances a great pace towards them; and irrecoverably lose the precious moments, which yet remain for their escape. 2dly, When worldly men cannot entirely avoid the thought of damnation,

which

he meant to stop the current of our crimes? Would we penetrate into his counsels, and, after having (as it were) extorted his confidence, indiscreetly publish his secrets?-- Let us not *be wise above what is written*, let us preach the gospel as it has pleased God to commit it to us. He has not judged that the doctrine of eternal punishments would wound the holiness of his attributes, don't let us think so then." *Ser. de l'enfer. tom. ii.*

"Where is the minister of the gospel who has not a

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thousand, and a thousand times, displayed the charms of religion, and displayed them in vain? Some souls must be terrified, some sinners must be *saved with fear, and pulled out of the fire*. Some hearts are sensible only to one religious object, that is hell, and, if there be any one way of preventing their being really precipitated into that frightful abyss by and by, it is by precipitating them there in imagination now. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*" *Sur les Compas.*

which is frequently the case, for God often thunders in their consciences, as well as in the air, and these thunder claps frequently awake the most sleepy; when this is the case, I say, they venture to take refuge in *false notions*. 1. They flee to the mercy of God. "God, say they, is indeed our judge: but he is a gracious judge, he has the compassions of a father," and so on. When a sinner would flatter himself, he will not fail to magnify reigning grace, and to collect all the most tender, and soft passages of scripture on the subject. What a marvellous abuse is this of mercy! To make it an argument against the just punishments their crimes have deserved. True, God is merciful: but he is so only to repenting sinners, and not to those, who persevere in their crimes. Mercy, on the contrary, arms itself to pursue the impenitent, for mercy is cruelly abused, nor will mercy allow the impunity of that sinner, who persists in sin, and would make compassion itself an accomplice in his crimes. 2. The wicked seldom fail to abuse the evangelical doctrine of the death of Christ. "*The blood of Jesus Christ* (say they) *cleanseth from all sin.*" But this is to make Jesus Christ the minister of sin, and to entertain the most horrible of all notions, that he came into the world to leave men in an abyss of corruption, and to make himself a church, a mystical body composed of infidels, and libertines. Harsh as this may appear, it must be so, if there were any room for the illusion of these miserable people, who, to evade the necessity of repentance, oppose the unapplied blood of Christ against the fear of damnation. (1)

### 3. The

(1) *Impenitent sinners take* our ministers allow, that the  
*refuge in false notions.* As all doctrines of grace may be mis-  
understood



3. The greatest part of these people, when they see the sword of divine justice, accustom themselves to hide in a *multitude* like themselves, and to oppose their numbers against the natural fear of punishment. "If God (say they) were as rigorous as you represent him, Paradise would be a desert, and all men would be damned, for how few keep his commandments! how few forsake sin by such a repentance as you require of us!" But Jesus Christ has already answered this vain objection, *many are called*, said he, but *few chosen*. Isaiah and St. Paul have answered it, *though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant only shall be saved*. How great soever the number of those, who perish, may be, their perdition will be never the less. The death of them, who were ingulphed in the deluge, was not the less painful for being general; nor was the destruction of the five cities by fire from heaven the less terrible to the unhappy sufferers, because Lot and his family only were saved. (2)

## 4. One

understood and abused by libertines, what becomes of that argument against christianity, which is derived from the loose lives of some of its professors? Every doctrine has been abused, because every doctrine has been misunderstood by somebody. Christianity in this point is analogous to Judaism, natural religion, the blessings of providence, and the whole created universe. Observe how some heathens abused the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

"A malis mors abducit, non a bonis, verum si quærimus. Et quidem hoc a Cyrenaico Hegesia sic copiose disputatur, ut is a rege Ptolemæo prohibitus esse dicatur illa in scholiis dicere; quod multi his auditis mortem sibi ipsi conscisserent. Callimachi quidem epigramma in Cleombrotum est, quem ait, cum ei nihil accidisset adversi, e muro se in mare abjecisse lecto Platonis libro." *Cicero. Tuscul.*

*Disp.*

(2) *Deluded people try to*

4. One of the most common evasions, which the wicked use to elude their conversion, is to consider damnation as a very distant thing, and to oppose to the idea the advantages, and sweetneſſes, which they find in sinful present objects. “ Let us enjoy (say they) the time present, and not trouble ourselves about futurity.” I grant, when *God is for us*, this maxim of not troubling ourselves about futurity is good, and necessary to preserve a tranquillity in the mind: but it is only good because it is wise, and it is only wise because we therein commit the care of futurity to the providence of an all-merciful, and almighty Father, who watches over believers, and will suffer no evil to befall them. But there is no greater folly than to be careless about futurity when *God is against us*. With the help of this negligence, our punishments increase in proportion to our sins. *After thy hardness, and impenitent heart, (says the apostle) thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* (3) Sinners, you would have been a thousand times

*hide themselves in the multitude.* I know of no writer, who goes deeper into this illusion than the celebrated Voltaire. Against all positive proofs brought by divines for Christianity, he constantly opposes the multitudes, that live without it, the number and antiquity of the Chinese, the Japanese, the Mexicans, and so on. This is the sort of writers of this sort, and a beggarly one it is!

(3) *Day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* The following plan for discussing this doctrine in the *propositional* way, appears to me beautifully just and clear. “ Eccl. xi. 9. *Rejoice, O young man! in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*

times less miserable, if God had shortened your days, if he had done you the favour (if I may speak so) of putting you to death in your cradle; had he subjected you to the pain of natural death, he would at least have saved you from the accumulated torments, which the commission of so many actual sins have deserved; and the longer you live the more terrible will the judgments of divine justice be; for as your days increase, the  
number

*ment.* Proposition 1. There is a judgment to come. Prop. 2. *Thou* shalt be brought to judgment. Prop. 3. God will bring thee to judgment. Prop. 4. God will bring thee to judgment for these things, the ways of thy heart, &c. Prop. 5. God will bring thee to judgment for all these things. Prop. 6. All this is certain and evident; for it is not think or believe: but *know* thou."

This sermon was preached at the Abby Church in Westminster, before the house of Peers, Oct. 10th, 1666, on a day of fasting and humiliation, on account of the late fire of London, by Seth Ward, Lord bishop of Exeter; and, although I praise the *form* of discussion, as an example of the clear, yet far be it from me to applaud the *spirit*, in which the application runs. It goes exactly *more episcopali*, or, shall I rather say, *more Neronio*? What a cruel heart

must a man have, who could coolly apply such a calamitous event as the fire of London, and such an awful subject as fiery future judgment, to purposes of *persecution*! Alas! Alas! Had not some non conformists, who were burnt out, suffered enough by fire without the addition of imprisonment for conscience-sake! Was the fire of London, indeed, intended to establish the hierarchy! And was persecuting men for conscience-sake the *best* use, that a British house of Peers could make of that national calamity, the burning of half their metropolis! Let us hear this inhuman disciple of the most compassionate of masters.

"God hath upheld our religion and government . . . and hath given us this *seasonable* opportunity . . . to attend the publique service. It is difficult to restore our city, and defend our country, to restore the houses of God, and

number of your sins increase too. (4) Besides all this, who told you that your damnation was at the distance

and publique buildings, to re-edify ten thousand private habitations, to sustain the poor and needy, to preserve the rights and properties of men, to find such a temper of justice and equity, that there be no decay, no just *complaining in our streets*, to uphold the traffic of the nation, and to keep it in order and security, free from private robberies and publick insurrections, and therefore, *in order to all those ends.*"

. . . Now, reader, what do you think his Lordship ought to say next? He has laid down, you allow, a great number of desirable *ends*: what *means* ought he to propose to his noble auditors for the obtaining of them? I protest, no good christian would guess what follows. Hear his Lordship's own words. "*In order to all those ends*, to uphold *our religion* in the zealous and effectual exercise, in the sincerity and UNIFORMITY thereof, to preserve it from encroachments, and undermining TOLERATIONS, ruinous to religion, destructive to the government of the nation." Thanks be to God! time has proved this a lying prophet. Episcopal *uniformity* has been dispensed

with, *toleration* has been granted, and yet neither is religion ruined, nor government destroyed.

If, young student, you have a mind to amuse yourself, by examining the paw of this dead lion, you may cast his doctrine into propositional form—as—the act of parliament, that forbids a non-conformist minister to come within five miles of a corporation town, will uphold national traffic—will preserve the rights and properties of men—will restore publick buildings—will re-build ten thousand private houses—will prevent all just complaining *in our streets*. Nothing, you see, can be clearer. They can never complain in the streets, who must not come within five miles of the town!

(4) *Had ye died in your cradle, ye would have been saved from accumulated torments.* Various opinions concerning the future state of infants have been adopted. Some think, all dying in infancy are *annihilated*; for, say they, infants, being incapable of moral good and evil, are not proper objects of reward or punishment. Others say, infants are most of them *damned* for Adam's sin. Some think,



distance you imagine? The Lord once said to Cain, *If thou doest evil, sin lieth at the door.* This every sinner ought to apply to himself, his crimes are at the door. Death follows sin, step by step, wherever it goes, and who can assure you of twenty-four hours life? "Conversion (you say) is proper for old men; but it is not proper for young people: let us pass our juvenile years without perplexing ourselves about these scrupulous reflections, they will come in their season." No, they will never come; for the insult you offer to the mercy of God, who calls you, by proudly putting him off

think, they share a fate similar to that of adults, a *part* are saved, and a *part* perish. Others affirm *all are saved*, because all are immortal, and all are innocent. Others, perplexed with these divers sentiments, think best to leave the subject untouched. Cold comfort to parents, who bury their families in infancy! The most probable opinion seems to be, that they are *all* saved through the merit of the mediator, with an everlasting salvation. This has nothing in it contrary to the perfections of God, or to any declarations of the holy scriptures; and it is highly agreeable to all those passages, which affirm, *where sin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded.* On these principles, the death of Christ saves more than the fall of Adam lost.

Great objections have been made against revelation on account of its commanding the Israelites, at certain times, to slay the *infants* and *sucklings* of devoted cities: but these objections are founded on an unfair parallel between the government of God and just civil governments among men. There are *three differences* between them, and an attention to these solves the difficulty. 1. Magistrates are guardians of life: but not *authors* of it, as God is. 2. Magistrates cannot *indemnify* an infant for the loss of its natural life: God can. 3. Magistrates cannot *foresee* whether the infant would be a blessing or a curse to society: God can. We cannot use too much caution in comparisons of this kind.

off till a *more convenient season*, will provoke him to withdraw when that season comes. You would fix God your time, you would act like sovereigns to him, you would have him go, when you say go, and come, when you say come: but you are not masters. Do you think to deceive, and act fraudulently with him? Why, were it only for your hypocrisy, you would render yourself eternally unworthy of conversion.

5. The wicked have moreover used themselves to another illusion, that is, to *extenuate* their sins, and to hide the enormity and number of them. "We are not (say they) so criminal as is imagined; it is the custom of preachers to exaggerate every thing, and to over-act all. We love pleasure, it is true, we labour to acquire riches, we have pride and ambition, we would cut a good figure in the world, and what can be more natural than all this? And where are the saints, who are not affected with the same passions?" Foolish souls! I sincerely pity you! I own, were ye to give an account of your actions to me, or, if you please, to the most severe, and discerning of all men, yea, were ye to give an account of your lives to an angel, or to all the angels of heaven together, perhaps you might palliate your crimes, no doubt you would have art, and address enough to conceal, at least one half of your sins, and to diminish considerably the enormity of the other half: but neither men, nor angels are to enquire into your lives; you must appear before the tribunal of an all-seeing God, before whom there is no vail so thick, which he does not penetrate, and in comparison of whom *the heavens are unclean*, and the angels unwise. *Whither will ye go from his spirit, or whither will ye flee from his presence?*

presence? If you ascend up into heaven he is there, if you make your bed in hell he is there, if you take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall his hand lead you, and his right hand hold you. If you say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, be assured, the night shall be light about you, know that the darkness hideth not from him, but the night shineth as the day, the darkness and the light are both alike to him. It is any easy thing to flatter one's self, and to declare one's self righteous, by comparing one's self with thieves, and high-way robbers: but when a man compares himself with the unspotted purity of God, when God's immortal hand applies the rule of his law to the heart, the holiest must become nothing, and say to him, *Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth righteousness, but unto me shame, and confusion of face. If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord who can stand?* My righteousness before thee is as filthy rags. Now if this be the language of a holy man,—if the righteous scarcely are saved, where shall the ungodly, and sinner appear? (5)

But

(5) *The wicked extenuate their sins.* There is a fine passage to this purpose in the thirty-sixth psalm. *The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes; for he flattereth himself in his own eyes until his iniquity be found to be hateful.* Abundance of literal criticism has been made on this verse, a great many difficulties started, and all learnedly run down,

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one side rejecting what another applauded. It should seem, there is an art of grinding and pulverizing the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, practised with infinite labour, and tending to nobody's edification. This verse has given ample scope to expositors of this sort; and, after all, it gives no tolerable sense without admitting that rule of exposition, which goes on the *idiom* of a language, and gives rather

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But, to speak plainly, all these are only vain pretences, the falshood of which even the wicked acknowledge; the only reason why they avoid conversion is that ardent love, that obstinate attachment, which they have to vice. This is the true cause, and all the rest are only, if they would speak honestly, all the rest are only vain pretences. The avaritious is not ignorant that an intense, furious love to the world is odious to God, and men. The ambitious knows the gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to far more noble dignities than any the world can offer, he knows that his ambition is incompatible with that christian moderation, which religion ordains. The voluptuous is not ignorant that his debaucheries and excesses are directly contrary to the profession of the gospel. In general, all sinners know very well that they do wrong, and they know also that by such means they draw down upon themselves the wrath, and curse of God. Yet, however clear their knowledge of these awful truths may be, when the idea of riches presents itself to the covetous, when that of honours tempts the ambitious, when that of pleasure stares at the debauchee, so powerfully are their passions touched by these objects, that they are insensible

ther the sense of the whole than of each component part. "I have made my own observations on that wicked man, Saul, and I have imagined, he is an atheist. I observe, although he commits many crimes, for which, did he fear God, he would always blush, yet he never blushes till his iniquities appear hateful in the eyes of his

fellow creatures. He even affects to be a good man, and wears the mask till it cements with his face, accounting himself as good as any other man, till somebody detects his vices, and exposes him to shame; and this is the common condition of almost all bad men." This seems not an improbable sense of the passage.



fible to every thing else, all their reason evaporates, and vanishes before these dear objects, the mind is for one thing, the heart for another, and in this combat between judgment and affection, the heart always obtains the conquest. Now, I ask, is not this love to sin the greatest folly in the world? when on the one hand it renders us incapable of enjoying ourselves, and dishonours us in our own eyes, depriving us of one of the most sweet, and valuable of all our blessings, which is a just esteem of ourselves, the joy of being able to approve our own conduct: and on the other hand destroys us, for it draws upon us the condemnation of God, and conducts us a great pace towards those eternal torments, which he has prepared for the wicked. (6)

### Passing

(6) *Sin dishonours us in our own eyes.* Perhaps one cause of much unprofitable preaching is an indistinct notion of the dignity of human nature. Consider man *physically*, and too great things cannot be said of his dignity, *he is fearfully and wonderfully made.* But view him *morally*, and he is *fearfully and wonderfully vile.* It is easy to see how dangerous a mistake is here; for the remedies we apply will always be suited to the ideas we form of the maladies we would remove. Hence on the one hand light and gentle reproofs of the most enormous crimes, and hence on the other, those weighty and powerful discourses, which are so much admired, because so

much felt: Mr. Claude's *seven* observations might be all exemplified from the greatest preachers amongst his own countrymen: but I will mention only a few.

Our author's last observation, that depravity of heart, and not defect of understanding, emboldens numbers in sin, is the ground of the following sermon.

Bp. Massillon on John vii. 27. composes his exordium of this thought, that the greatest part of those, who say they are infidels, are *not* so. He observes, "that, if the *fool* says there is no God, it is in his heart he says so; that is, it is the language of *desire*, he wishes there was none." He

Passing on to the second proposition, (that the practice of good works, and an holy and religious life

adds, “ to be a debauchee and admit a hell is to be a novice in debauchery, the libertine must therefore, to keep himself in countenance, affect to deny it.” He concludes with this fine remark, “ Religion would have no enemies, if itself were not an enemy to vice.” *Pour le mardi de la iv. sem. Car. iv.*

Mr. Claude’s 2d obs. that sinners on certain occasions *magnify mercy*, is the maxim on which, I presume, Massillon composed the sermon entitled *Vain confidence*. The text is Luke xxiv. 21. He observes “ that expecting to be crowned without warring a good warfare is an error the most universal, and the most established among professing christians, though it has no authority from Jesus Christ ;” and, alluding to his text, adds, “ when the Lord appears a second time upon earth, he will find many infidel-disciples, who will say to him, *we trusted.*” *Lundi de pasques. Car. iii.*

Mr. C’s 5th remark, on considering punishment as a *distant* thing, is the ground of Saurin’s sermon on Eccl. viii. 11, 12. “ I am struck with horror (says he) when I consider this disposition in

its true point of light ; it seems to me as if it were impossible, except to monsters, who have eradicated not only every seed of piety and religion from their hearts, but even every degree of reason, and humanity.—But let us rend the veils, with which we usually conceal ourselves from ourselves, let us dive into these hearts *deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*, and we shall find that this disposition, which, at first sight, makes us shudder with horror, is one of those with which we are most familiar. Were we convinced that God had the formidable design of plunging us into the depths of hell on the first act of rebellion, who is he, who is he, who would have the madness to be a rebel ? Why then are we rebels ? The wise man tells us, *because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily.*” *Sur le delai que Dieu accorde aux pecheurs. tom. vii.*

That most admired piece of modern eloquence, Massillon’s sermon on the death of the sinner, and the death of the righteous, said by some good judges to be the finest piece of eloquence that the latter ages have produced, is an assemblage of *all* the above-mentioned

life is the principal end, which the gospel proposes, and the principal character of a true christian) you must first establish it by solid scripture proofs. As—*The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* Tit. ii. 11, 12.—*This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou*

mentioned observations, represented under the most affecting images. The following passage has been exceedingly admired. “ Alors le pécheur mourant, ne trouvant plus dans le souvenir du passé que des regrets, qui l'accablent ; dans tout ce qui se passe à ses yeux, que des images qui l'affligent ; dans la pensée de l'avenir, que des horreurs qui l'épouvantent : ne sachant plus à qui avoir recours : ni aux créatures, qui lui échappent : ni au monde, qui s'évanouit ; ni aux hommes, que ne sauroient le délivrer de la mort ; ni au Dieu juste, qu'il regarde comme un ennemi déclaré, dont il ne doit plus attendre d'indulgence : il se roule dans ses propres horreurs ; il se tourmente, il s'agite pour fuir la mort qui le saisit, ou du moins pour se fuir lui-même : y fort de ses yeux mourans, je ne sai quoi de sombre, et de farouche, qui exprime les fureurs de son ame : il pousse du fond de sa tristesse des paroles entrecou-

pées de sanglots, qu'on n'entend qu'à demi ; et qu'on ne fait si c'est le desespoir ou le repentir qui les a formées : il jette sur un Dieu crucifié des regards affreux, et qui laissent douter si c'est la crainte ou l'esperance, la haine ou l'amour qu'ils expriment : il entre dans des saisissemens où l'on ignore si c'est le corps qui se dissout, ou l'ame qui sent l'approche de son juge, il soupire profondement ; et l'on ne fait si c'est le souvenir de ses crimes qui lui arrache ces soupirs, ou le desespoir de quitter la vie. Enfin au milieu de ces tristes efforts, ses yeux se fixent, ses traits changent, son visage se défigure, sa bouche livide s'entrouvre d'elle-même ; tout son corps frémit ; et par ce dernier effort, son ame infortunée s'arrache comme à regret de ce corps de boue, tombe entre les mains de Dieu, et se trouve seule aux pieds du tribunal redoutable. *Advent* p. 61. 62. *a Paris, 1762.*

See p. 350 of this vol.

*thou affirm constantly, That they, which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works. Tit. iii. —The same apostle elsewhere, distinguishing true from false professors, says, For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, That they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and who glory in their shame, who mind earthly things : but our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus. Phil. iii.—We are his workmanship, says the same apostle, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. The whole sixth of Romans is written to shew that the true end of the doctrine of grace is to sanctify men. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. &c. (7) Again,*  
in

(7) *We are buried with him by baptism into death.* Almost all commentators allow, that this passage is descriptive of the mode and end of primitive baptism. The mode was that of immersion, and the end or design of immersing the disciple of Christ was to represent his faith in a redeemer, who died, was buried, and rose again, and his own professing to die to sin,

and to rise into newness of life. “*Christum sepultum per baptismum representamus. Ostendit non verba tantum baptismi, sed et ipsam ejus formam, hoc innuere. Nam immersio totius corporis in flumen, ita ut non conspiceretur amplius, imaginem gerebat sepulturæ quæ datur mortuis. Confer. Cor. xi. 12. Alludit ad illum ritum immergendi, ubi corpus quasi sepeliebatur,*



in his epistle to the Galatians, having strongly defended that gospel liberty, which Jesus Christ has acquired by his blood for us, he prevents an abuse, which might be made of it, by adding, *Brethren, ye have been called to liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh—Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh—for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other—Now the works of the flesh are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they, which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

ebatur, et mox rursus exarhebatur tanquam e sepulchro.”—*Poli Synops. in loc.*

Now, to a man, who allows that baptism was originally administered to adults by immersion, the modern baptists only propose one modest question. If the founders of the christian church administered baptism so, and if no authenticated religious legislators have arisen since, by what authority is it now administered to infants by sprinkling, seeing such an administration changes both subject and mode? *The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven or of men? Matt. xxi. 25.* All, who pretend to defend

that innovation, infant-sprinkling, do but trifle, except they go to the true ground of the debate, and either prove—that infant sprinkling is somewhere appointed by Christ our legislator—or that the authority of Christ is not necessary to the establishment of a positive institute—or that some person has since appeared vested with such authority as Christ himself exercised. Circumcision, Abraham’s covenant, Greek particles, and a thousand more such topicks, no more regard the subject than the first verse of the first book of Chronicles, *Adam, Seth, Enosh.*

*faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.* (8) We must here

(8) *Christians have crucified the flesh.* S. Paul lays down in this period a beautiful model of the manner of discussing difficult and abstruse questions in theology. Every question is subject to two sciences, philosophy and theology. Philosophy explains it; theology improves it. If philosophy cannot comprehend the mode, and yet allows the fact, theology does not alter the state of the case: but, taking the fact allowed, and leaving conjectures and debates concerning the reasons of it, applies itself to an improvement of the whole case to moral purposes. This is building on sure ground.

The case before us is of this kind. The senses of my body rebel against the deliberate reasonings of my mind, or, as the apostle words it, *the flesh lusteth against the spirit.* How is it consistent with the wisdom and goodness of my creator to put my reason to such a severe and constant trial? This is a difficult question. Let us see how the apostle handles it.

1. Observe, the question is not the invention of modern philosophers. They often boast more than they ought

of superior sagacity. Their predecessors, pagan philosophers knew this objection; it was agitated in the apostle's days. He himself knew it.

2. S. Paul allows the fact. *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

3. He exposes the dismal consequences of yielding to the current. In this world ignorance produces *idolatry*, avarice *witchcraft*, pride *variance*; and in a future state persons under the power of their passions will be excluded from *the kingdom of God.*

4. He opposes against this sad condition religion, that spiritual religion christianity, including *love, joy, peace*, and so on; a religion that gives energy to the dictates of right reason, and teaches it how to obtain an empire over the senses.

5. He observes, that, difficult as it might appear to realize this system, facts proved, some had realized it, *they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh.*

6. He proposes them as an example to others; *This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

This

here repeat almost all the whole New Testament, if we would particularly mention all the passages, which oblige us to good works, for the whole book enforces obedience. It is sufficient to speak of our Lord's divine and admirable words, *Let your light so shine before men, that, seeing your good works, they may glorify your Father, which is in heaven.* Indeed, by a general view of the end, for which Jesus Christ came into the world, you will see he came to *destroy the works of the devil.* The works of the devil are principally two, sin, and punishment. Let us not imagine, that Jesus Christ came into the world to take away punishment only, and to leave sin triumphant; he came to destroy both. I will even venture to say, he came to destroy sin rather than sorrow. Suffering concerns only the creature: but sin concerns the creator as well as the creature; it dishonours the one, and distresses the other. Punishment indeed makes man miserable: but at the same time it glorifies divine justice: but sin is equally contrary to the glory of God and the dignity of man. The principal end of Christ's coming upon earth was to destroy sin. Is it likely, think ye, that Jesus Christ would have quitted his mansion of glory, and descended to this earth to acquire an impunity for criminals, leaving them immersed in sensuality and sin? Is it likely, that he can hold communion with people in rebellion,  
and

This is a beautiful model of the apostle's method, and nothing can be objected against it. It did not lie on him, as an apostle of Christ, to *explain* the difficulty, that

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he left to philosophers: it only became him to improve an allowed fact to a pious purpose. This mode of preaching would shut many a brangle out of the church.

3 H

and profaneness? Is it possible for him, the *holy* Jesus, to join his spirit to our flesh, his purity to our profanity, his holiness to our iniquities? This would be saying he came to unite things, which cannot unite, and which are naturally and necessarily incompatible. One of the most imbibittered enemies of our religion reproached the primitive christians, that their Jesus came into the world to make the most horrible and dreadful societies, for (said he) he calls sinners, and not the righteous, so that the body he came to assemble is a body of profligates, separated from good people, amongst whom they were heretofore mixed; he has rejected all the good, and collected all the bad in the world. False and cruel accusation! Origen, in the name of the whole church, solidly refuted it. “ True, says he, our Jesus *came to call sinners* : but it was *to repentance*; he assembles the wicked : but it is to convert them into new men, or rather to change them into angels. We come to him covetous, he makes us liberal; unjust and extortioners, and he makes us equitable; lascivious, and he makes us chaste; violent and passionate, and he makes us meek; impious and profane, and he makes us religious.” This is the true effect of communion with Jesus Christ, it transforms us into his image, and this transformation is so essential, that if it does not appear in a man, we are obliged to conclude, he is not in communion with this great Saviour. But besides that holiness, love, and equity are inseparable from communion with Jesus Christ considered in himself, I add, they are also from communion with our heavenly Father, to which communion with Jesus Christ leads us. As he came into the world in the quality of a mediator,



tor, he called men to himself only to unite them to God; for which reason he said, *I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me*: and elsewhere, *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also, which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us*. But how is it possible that God should hold communion with people, who live in sin? *Thou art not a God* (says the prophet) *that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee*. *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight, thou hatest all workers of iniquity*. It is evident then that the religion of Jesus Christ, which brings us into communion with God, brings us also at the same time into true holiness, without which communion with God is not attainable. It is inconceivable, that, while we remain immersed in sensuality, and sin, we can be the temples of the Holy Ghost, as the scripture says true believers are. Can the Holy Ghost dwell in a man without producing effects of his power and grace? Can he dwell idly in a man? Can he possess his heart and affections, and yet leave his affections enslaved to sin? It is with the holy Spirit as with fire, which cannot be any where without heat; or, if you please, as the sun, which cannot be above the horizon without giving light; *That which is born of the flesh is flesh*, says our Saviour, *and that which is born of the spirit is spirit*. With the same view the apostle tells the Romans, *They, that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh, but they, that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit*. It is then impossible to be a true christian, or to have communion with Jesus Christ, unless we partake of his spirit; *If any man have*

*not the spirit of Christ*, says S. Paul, *he is none of his. Because ye are sons*, he says elsewhere, *God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.* From all which it clearly follows, that an unsanctified man has not the spirit of Christ, is not in communion with him, does not belong to his mystical body, is not a true believer, in a word, is not a real christian. Holiness is an inseparable companion, and a necessary effect of the gospel, and it is also an infallible character or mark of a sound convert. (9)

But,

(9) *Holiness is the mark of a sound convert.* A mark is a token by which any thing is known; a mark of conversion is such a character as distinguishes a true convert from a hypocrite. Pious persons are naturally desirous of ascertaining the truth and genuineness of their piety, and divines lay down many signs, tokens, or marks, by which they may be assisted in their enquiry. The unhappiness is, each of these marks may be counterfeited, so that there is usually as much difficulty in ascertaining the goodness of the *mark* as in making out the truth of that faith, which is to be proved by it. We will take the liberty to make a few observations on this subject.

1. Some lay down *spurious* marks. Thus one. "The best men cannot be sure of themselves until they have

been proved. . . But to see a good man, with Job, holding a dreadful disease no evil in comparison of *letting go his integrity*, is a noble trial and instance of justifying faith." This sermon is "*Against the dangerous and sinful practice of inoculation.*" The text is Job xi. 7. and according to our preacher's reasoning, to be inoculated is to *let go integrity*, and consequently to die of the small-pox in a natural way, through a dread of offending God by being inoculated, is a mark of justifying faith.—*Massey's ser. at S. Andrew's, Holbourne, July, 1722.*

2. Some lay down *arbitrary* marks of their own devising, *unscriptural* if not *antiscriptural*. The Athanasian creed affirms, *Except every one do keep the catholic faith whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish ever-*

But, if holiness be a necessary consequence of the gospel, it is no less true that the gospel is an inexhaustible source of motives to holiness. I pass over its precepts, and rules of conduct, which give us an idea of holiness in a manner so lively, so beautiful, and so full of charms, that it alone is a powerful motive to obedience. Nor will I stop to observe, that the nature of vice is represented in the gospel so fully, and the horror of it so well described, that we must needs hold it in abhorrence. It shall be sufficient now to remark to you, and (if may venture to say so) to make you feel by your own experience, that nothing can be conceived more powerful than the reasons, by which the christian religion enforces the necessary practice of good works. All its mysteries point at

*everlastingly.* Where has Jesus Christ said so?

3. Some lay down *general* marks, as—that christians believe *the truth*—love the people of *God*—desire to do *good*, and so on. The question in all these returns, who are the people of *God*? What is *the truth*? &c.

4. Some lay down *precari-ous* marks, as—that good men love *prayer*—rejoice in religious *ordinances*—pity and relieve the *poor*—and so on. All these may be found in a believer at one time, and thro' the infirmity of his nature may be absent at another. Should he always judge of his state therefore by a present frame, he might, as a good

divine used to say, look for the time on a sun dial when the sun did not shine.

Mr. Claude, along with all our best divines, takes the good man altogether, if I may speak so, and forms a judgment of his state by *the general habitual course of his life*. In like manner we say of one man, he enjoys a good state of health, of another, he is very rich, of a third, he is a very chearful companion; yet the first has been now and then sick, the second has sometimes wanted money, and the third has had days of gloom and shade. Holiness then is the general character of a good man.

at this. All the most grand, and most marvellous things it teacheth, regard this. All its doctrines are so many bonds, bonds the strongest, to bind our hearts to the obedience of faith, or, to use the language of S. Paul, they are so many *weapons of war, mighty through God, to cast down imaginations and every high thing, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* (1)

The

(1) *The doctrines of the gospel cast down imaginations, or reasonings.* This subject is discussed in a most masterly manner by the great Saurin in three sermons on Eccles. vii. 29.

The first sermon considers man in relation to the different systems of religion, which he adopts, and shews the abuse he makes of his reason by adhering to certain *doctrines*. The third considers man in relation to the different systems of felicity, which he pursues, and shews the abuse he makes of his reason in his *pursuits of happiness*. The *maxims* quoted at the beginning of this chapter are the parts of this discourse: but the second sermon more immediately relates to the subject, of which Mr. Claude is here speaking. In it he considers man as subject to a supreme legislator, and shews the abuse he makes of his reason in regard to *moral virtues*. He reduces the irregularities of the mind in morality to six

classes. The first he calls the irregularities of scepticism. 2d. The biases we have for the marvellous. 3d. The irregularities of orthodoxy. 4. Of exaggeration. 5. Of libertinism. 6. Of accommodation, and composition. In that on orthodoxy, he opposes such “as imagine that the essence of a christian’s calling is to have sound ideas of the mysteries of religion, and to embrace its promises, but that it is even dangerous to dwell much on its precepts. This pretence has against it (adds he) a world of demonstrations; but you will perceive the injustice of it sufficiently if the spirit of God is pleased to declare himself decisively on two propositions. 1st, The most sound and pure orthodoxy is useless, it is even dangerous, if it does not regulate the heart, and sanctify the life. Moreover, the more perfect a man’s knowledge, and the more pure his orthodoxy, the more rigorous will his punishment be, if his virtues are not suitable



The gospel consecrates to holy uses, even what the light of nature teacheth us—as, that God is our *creator*, who at the beginning called us into existence by his power, and made us what we are—that he is our *preserver*, who by a perpetual influence supports us, and prevents our falling back into non-entity—that it is his providence, which governs *all* the whole universe, particularly watches over us, and furnishes whatever his goodness and wisdom judge needful for us. What can more forcibly incline us to a practice of obedience than these important truths if well considered? For what obligations have we to God since he is our

suitable to his light.” This he requires at the oracles of God, and receives from Luke iii. 47. Mat. xi. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 21. 1 Cor. xiii. 1. &c. James ii. 19. a clear answer in the affirmative. His second proposition is, “The doctrines, which men have thought most proper to favour their indolence, are most proper to excite vigilance. Moreover, one chief end of the holy Spirit in revealing these doctrines, was to awaken our attention to practical piety.” These he takes one by one to scripture, and receives a clear answer, that they all enjoin the strictest diligence. *Man’s original depravity and weakness*, Mat. xxvi. 41. Phil. ii. 12, 13.—*Decrees*, 2 Pet. i. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Deut. xxx. 11, 12, to the end. *Free justification by the*

*blood of Christ without works*, Rom. vi. 1, 2, &c. Jam. i. 21. 26. *Perseverance*, Ezek. xxxiii. 12, 13. He closes by saying “it would be easy, my brethren, to heap up a far greater number of passages to prove these propositions: but, I sometimes ask myself, have we not declaimed too much, or written too much against those, who maintain that some doctrines in our gospel weaken the necessity of good works? There are some errors perpetuated only by our continuing to refute them.—Men, who profess to believe the bible a divine revelation, affirming that it is dangerous to press the necessity of its precepts, do they deserve to be seriously refuted? I pronounce nothing on this problem. But heap who will distinction

creator who gave us life, and being? Ought not we to devote all to him, from whom we received all? And if we owe him all, should not we be monsters rather than men to dishonour his creation, to insult his bounty, to rebel against his laws, and to have his glory always before our eyes? But, perhaps, creation may appear to you a distant benefit, which must needs have lost much of its value by the great number of ages, which have expired from the beginning of the world till now; or perhaps by the many years, which have passed since your birth. Surely, were this the case, a favour, which bestowed on us all we are, and all we have, however long since it was conferred, ought not to be forgotten on that account. But this is not true, for he, who created man at the beginning, he, who brought us into being, he it is, who still preserves us; and whose influence is still necessary to our existence: should he suspend it but one moment we should be no more. Every day, every moment then does God renew the favour, or, to speak more properly, every day, every moment he increases the number of his favours. David, speaking of the Messiah, says, *thou hast the dew of thy youth, from the womb of the morning.* (2) And in another place, on a different subject,

inction upon distinction; lose himself who will in scholastical labyrinths; seek out, who will, many inventions: for our parts, we will always admit the definition, which an apostle has given of religion. *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the*

*fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."* Saur. tom. iv. p. 376. *a la Haye.* 1755.

(2) "In holiness very beautiful, more than the aurora, or womb of the morning, when she is ready to bring forth the sun,

subject, *day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night sheweth knowledge.* (3) But we may say of God's wonderful preservation of us, that our life, our motion, our being, come every morning, not from the *womb of the morning*, but from the immortal sources of the goodness, and power of God. (4) One of his favours uttereth speech to another, since the moments are not more closely joined together than his favours are. Yet, more than all this, he adds his

sun, and then it is a noble figure to express the glorious beauty of God's ways." *Reynolds on the place.*

"Si quis distinctius habere velit sensum verborum, ita resolvat, ex utero prodituram esse innumeram sobolem, sicuti ros ab aurora distillat." *Calv. in loc.*

(3) *Day unto day.* "Dies quidem unus, si satis attenti essemus ut decebat, nobis idoneus esset gloriæ Dei testis: nox etiam una idem officium præstaret. Sed quum videmus solem et lunam quotidie suo ambitu mundum complecti, interdiu solem super capita nostra extare, lunam succedere vicibus, gradatim solem ascendere, et simul propius ad nos accedere, postea iter suum reflectere, ut a nobis paulatim recedat, hinc dierum vel noctium longitudinem confici, et hanc veritatem æquabili lege ita esse dispositam ut quotannis recurrat, hæc longe clarius testificatio est." *Calv. in Psal. xix.*

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Hic est enim (i. e. Christus) qui sicut sponsus egreditur de thalamo suo, exultavit ut Gigas ad currendam viam, a summo cœlo egressio ejus, et usque ad summum regressio ejus. *Novat. de trin. cap. xiii.*

(4) *Pf. cx. 3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.* We have elsewhere ventured a conjecture on this obscure passage. See *Saurin's sermons*, vol. ii. p. 84. *Thy people shall be willing in the day, when thou shalt assemble thy host in holy pomp.* We have supposed the passage a propheticall allusion to the old Jewish custom of conquerors returning from victorious battles, when they, and their armies presented to God a part of the spoils taken in war. These *free will* offerings were carried in solemn procession by the army to the temple. Thus the Messiah shall close the scene of his glorious achievements.

3 I

His

his providential care, he watches over us while we sleep, he thinks about us when we forget him, he defends, and protects us when we do not see him, he nourishes, and cloaths our bodies, he furnishes matter for our thoughts, and actions, he numbers the very hairs of our heads, and not one of them falls without him. O powerful motives to love, and obedience! Shall it be said, that God preserves ungrateful and rebellious creatures, who do nothing but affront him? Shall it be said, his sun cheers us in the same manner as it does serpents, and vipers, and that it influences us as it does envenomed dragons? Shall we keep none of his commandments, while he keeps each, the least hair of our heads? Alas! shall we be such miserable wretches as to abuse his own benefits to his dishonour?

But all these motives, however great and powerful, are nothing in comparison of those, which the gospel does not borrow from the light of reason, but takes from its own source, I mean such as come from supernatural revelation. These motives are almost all comprehended in Jesus Christ, and in the mysteries of his œconomy, and they are such as must affect every soul, which is not, I do not say hard and insensible, but entirely dead in sin, or possessed by the devil; for, in one word, that God after all our rebellions, and all our crimes, should yet be reconciled to us, that he should give his son, that he should give him to be flesh and blood like us, that he should give him

to

His followers and their offerings shall be numerous as the drops of dew, which the morn-

ing brings forth in the youth, or spring of the year.



to be our head, our brother, and our example, that he should give him to die for us, to die the most bloody, the most ignominious, and the most cruel death, that could be conceived, is not this love and mercy worthy of eternal praise? And what horrible ingratitude must it be, if after all this we should be yet capable of wilfully sinning against a God so good, and of counting *the blood of such a covenant an unholy thing?* (5)

After

(5) *Motives taken from revelation.* Thus Saurin. "Above all enter into his sanctuary, fix your meditation on the incarnate word, comprehend, if your mind be capable of comprehending, what it is for a God to *become of no reputation; and to take upon him the form of a servant.* Consider the majesty of God, approach his throne, behold his fiery flaming eyes, see the power, and majesty, which fill his sanctuary, view the armies of heaven ministering to his will, and thus, if possible, form some idea of the supreme being. Think that this God united himself to mortal flesh, in order to suffer for us whatever the fury of men, and the rage of devils could invent. I know not, my brethren, what impressions these objects make on you, for my part, I own, if any thing could render christianity doubtful or problematical to me, it would be what it tells us on this mys-

tery. I own, I need at least all my faith, and all the authority of him, who speaks in our scriptures, to persuade me that God would abase himself in this manner. But if amidst the darkness with which this mystery is covered, I spy a small glimmering light to reduce it in some sort to my size, this glimmering ray discovers to me the punishments, which God will inflict on those, who despise so great a sacrifice. After this, the doctrine of eternal punishments seems to have nothing contrary to divine justice. No, this burning lake with its smoke, this eternity with its abyss, these devils with their rage, this hell with its horrors, have nothing, methinks, too rigorous for men who have *trod under foot the Son of God, counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and crucified afresh the Lord of glory.*" Saur. ser. sur les tourmens de l'enfer. tom. ii.

After this, some moral consequences may be drawn from the truth you have proved. As first, that christianity is dishonoured when the outward profession of it is attended with a bad life, for it proves how little efficacy religion has had upon us, and it gives occasion to the profane to insult the christian religion, and to impute to it the vices of its professors. *Our conversations*, says Tertullian, *blush when compared with our sentiments*. St. Paul speaks stronger still, *the name of God*, says he, *is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you*. 2. You may also shew how they deceive themselves, who, without sanctification and good works, imagine themselves christians. They are by no means christians; they scandalously bear a name, which they have rashly usurped, but which indeed does not belong to them; they are *bastards and not sons*, or rather they are *born of flesh and blood*, but not of God: but true christians, according to St. John, *are born of God, and not of the will of the flesh, nor of the*

How awfully true is the following complaint of the good Fenelon to his God. "O God! Men sleep in thy tender, and paternal bosom, and full of deceitful dreams are insensible of the mighty hand that holds them. Wert thou a barren, weak, and inanimate body, such as a fading flower, a passing river, a decaying house, a picture which is only an assemblage of colours to strike the fancy, or an useless metal to dazzle the eye, they would perceive thee, and would foolishly at-

tribute to thee the power of giving them pleasure, though indeed inanimate things, which have no pleasing sensations, can communicate none. Of pleasure thou art the only source. Wert thou only a gross, brittle, and inanimate being, a mass without life, the shadow of a being, thy vain nature would busy their vanity, thou wouldest be an object proportioned to their base, and brutal minds." *Oeuvres philos. tom. i. 176. tom. ii. 155.*

*the will of man.* 3. The vainest of all hopes is to imagine that we may be saved by the bare profession of christianity, without any regard to good works. I own the christian religion gives life: but it is only to those, who are sanctified. *You shall live*, says the apostle, but on what condition? *if ye mortify the deeds of the body*, (6) The bare outward profession, far from saving men, will only aggravate their condemnation, according to this inviolable maxim of Jesus Christ, *That servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.* In another place, describing the form of the last judgment, he says, many will come to him in that day, saying, *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works?* But he will profess unto them, *I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* Finally you may add reproofs, and exhortations.

It must not be thought, that these four ways of discussing texts are so heterogeneous, that they can never be mixed together; on the contrary, there  
are

(6) *Conditions of salvation.* Our author does not mean to establish the popish notion of merit, when he calls holiness a *condition*, he only means that it is (as they call it) *causa sine qua non*; that is, that good works are necessary to *salvation*, not to *justification*. In this he agrees with scripture, Matt. x. 22. Heb. x.

36. xii. 4. Rom. x. 10. So that he is to be understood here in perfect consistency with what he says elsewhere on Phil. ii. 13. Vol. i. p. 197, &c. They are, says one, the way to the throne, not the price of the crown. *Via regni, non causa regnandi.* —Bernard.



are a great many texts, in which it will be necessary to make use of two, or three, and sometimes even of all the four ways. When a text is *explained*, it will be very often needful to make some *observations* also, and the matter will require as long an *application*. Sometimes to explain a text well, the matter must be reduced into many *propositions*, as we have observed on these words, *It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure*. In like manner, when the method of *observation* is used, it very often happens that some part of the text needs *explaining*, and so of the rest. (7) These four ways must be distinguished for two reasons. 1st. Because they are very different from one another: to explain, to make observations, to apply, and

(7) *Methods of discussion may be mixed.* Mr. Saurin, on Heb. x. 5, &c. *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God*, first considers the words as proceeding from Christ's mouth, and secondly as the language of his people. In the first part he says, there are three things necessary. 1st, Our text is a citation, it must be *verified*. 2. It is difficult, it must be *explained*. 3. It is one of the most essential truths of religion, it must be solidly *proved*.

Mr. Dumont uses very a-

greeably *proposition* and *application* on 1 Cor. xiii. 9. He discusses the subject in two sermons. In the first he says, "I will *explain* this humbling truth in two *propositions* expressed in the text; the one, that God has not judged it necessary to reveal himself fully to us, *we know but in part*. The other, that our knowledge of what God has been pleased to reveal is very imperfect, *we prophesy but in part*." In the second sermon he *applies* the subject to use, and teaches a lesson of faith, humility, meekness, resignation, diligence, deadness to the world, &c.—*Serm. par Dumont, sur l'imperf. de nos Connoissances*.



and to reduce to propositions, are four very different ways of treating a text. A composer, then, must not confound them together: but he must observe the difference well, that he may use them properly. 2d. Because it is customary to give the discussion of a text the name of the *prevailing* manner of handling it. We call that the way of explication, in which there is more explication than observation. We not only call that the way of observation, which has only observations, but that in which there is more observation than explication, or application; and so of the rest.



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## C H A P. IX.

### Of the EXORDIUM.

**T**HE Exordium is that part, in which the minds of the hearers are *prepared*, and a natural and easy way opened to the discussion. (1)

But first, a question presents itself (on which opinions are much divided) whether Exordiums be  
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(1) *The Exordium prepares the hearers for the discussion.*

Mr. Claude's rules for Exordiums are perfectly agreeable to those of ancient orators, and most likely taken from them, to whose directions nothing can be added. It shall suffice to observe his agreement with some.

“ Quod principium Latine vel Exordium dicitur, majore quadam ratione Græci videntur προεμνιον nominasse: quia a nostris initium modo significatur, illi satis clarè partem hanc esse ante ingressum rei de qua dicendum sit, ostendunt. Nam sive propterea

quòd οἱ μὴ cantus est, et citharædi pauca illa quæ antequam legitimum cartamen inchoent, emerendi favoris gratia canunt, procæmium vocaverunt: oratores quoque ea quæ priusquam causam exordiantur, ad conciliandos sibi judicum animos præloquuntur, eadem appellatione signarunt: sive quod οἱ μὴ iidem Græci viam appellant, id quod ante ingressum rei ponitur, sic vocare est institutum: certe procæmium est quod apud judicem dici priusquam causam cognoverit, profit, *Quint. inst. lib. iv. cap. i.*

necessary? or even whether they be not in all cases quite useless, and in some hurtful? Whether it would not be better entirely to omit them, to begin immediately with the connection of the text with preceding verses, pass to the division, and so enter on the discussion? There are many of this opinion, and their reasons are, 1st. That there appears too much *artifice* in an Exordium, which is more likely to dissipate than to conciliate the attention of your hearers. "It is evident (say they) to the auditors, that you design to come insensibly, and by a kind of artful manœuvre to your matter, and to lead your hearers almost imperceptibly to it: but this seems a finesse altogether unworthy of the gospel, and contrary to that sincerity, ingenuousness, gravity, and simplicity, which should reign in the pulpit. Indeed, when a wise hearer perceives you design to deceive him, he conceives a strong prejudice against you, and that prejudice will certainly be hurtful in the following part of the discourse."

They add in the *second* place, that "Exordiums are *extremely difficult to compose*, and justly stiled the *crosses of preachers*. Should some small advantage be gained by Exordiums, it would not be of consequence enough to induce us to compose them. In so doing we should waste a part of our time and strength, which might be much more usefully employed."

They say *thirdly*, that "the principal end proposed in an Exordium is either to conciliate the hearer's affection, or to excite his attention, or to prepare the way to the matters to be treated of: but all these are to be *supposed*. As to their affection, pastors, who preach to their own flocks, ought



ought not to doubt that. We speak to christians, to persons who consider us as the ministers of Jesus Christ, whom consequently they respect and love. As to attention, it ought also to be supposed ; not only because pulpit-subjects are divine and salutary to men, but also because such only come to publick worship as desire to hear the word of God attentively : and indeed, if the auditors have not that disposition of themselves, an Exordium cannot give it them. Such a disposition is an effect of a man's faith, and piety, and it is not to be thought, that an Exordium of eight or ten periods can convert the worldly and profane, or give faith and piety to those, who have them not. As to what regards the introducing of the matter to be treated of, the bare reading of the text sufficiently does that ; for, according to the common way of preaching, the text contains the subject to be discussed."

Finally, they add, " delivering an Exordium is only mispending *time*, uselessly dissipating a part of the hearers attention, so that afterward they frequently sleep very quietly when you enter on the discussion. Would it not be better then immediately to engage them in the matter, so that their attachment may afterward serve to maintain their attention, according to the natural inclination which all men have to finish what they have once begun ?"

But none of these reasons are weighty enough to persuade us to reject Exordiums, or to be careless about them. As to the first. The art, which appears in an Exordium, so far from being odious in itself, and seeming unnatural to the hearers, is

on the contrary altogether natural. (2) It is disagreeable to enter abruptly into theological matters without any preparation. It would not be necessary, were our minds all exercised about divine things: but as, alas! we are in general too little versed in such exercises; it is good to be conducted to them without violence, and to have emotions excited in us in a soft, and insensible manner. It is not finessè, and deceit, since in doing it we only accommodate ourselves to the weakness of man's mind, and indeed it is what he himself desires. Moreover, it is to be observed, that hearers are now so habituated to an Exordium, that if they heard a preacher enter abruptly into his matter, they would

(2) *The art of introduction is altogether natural.* That is, it is natural to man to enter coolly and deliberately on a new, and foreign subject; and to lead men by an Exordium from earth (as it were) to heaven is an art perfectly agreeable to such natural inclinations. It may not be improper to subjoin what Quintilian says of composition, as the remark is just and very beautiful.

“ Neque ignoro quosdam esse, qui curam omnem compositionis excludant, atque illum horridum sermonem ut forte effluxerit, modo magis naturalem, modo etiam magis virilem esse contendunt. Qui si id demum naturale esse dicunt, quod a natura primum ortum est, et quale ante cultum fuit, tota hæc ars orandi

subvertetur. Neque enim locuti sunt ad hanc regulam et diligentiam primi homines, nec procemiis præparare, docere expositione, argumentis probare, affectibus commovere scierunt. Ergo his omnibus, non sola compositione caruerunt: quorum si fieri nihil melius licebat, ne domibus quidem casas, aut vestibis pellium tegmina, aut urbibus montes ac sylvas mutari oportuit. Quæ porro ars statim fuit? quid non culta nitescit? cur vites coercemus manu? cur eas fodimus? rubos arvis excidimus? terra et hæc generat. Mansuefacimus animalia? indomita nascuntur. Verum, id est maxime naturale, quod fieri natura optime patitur.” *Inst. lib. ix. cap. iv.*

would be extremely disgusted, and would imagine, the man was aiming to do with them what the angel did with Habbakkuk, when he took him by the hair of his head, and transported him in an instant from Judea to Babylon. (3) Some time, then, ought to be employed gently to lead the mind of the hearer to the subjects, of which you are going to treat. You are not to suppose that he already understands them, nor that he is thinking on what you have been meditating, nor that he can apply it instantly without preparation.

The second reason may have some weight with weak and lazy preachers, but it has none with wise and diligent students: and, after all, exordiums are not so difficult, as to be impracticable; a little pains taking is sufficient, as we every day experience.

The third is not more considerable. I grant, preachers ought to suppose the love and affection of their hearers: yet it does not follow, that they ought not to excite it, when they preach to them. Perhaps their affection is not always in exercise, it may be sometimes suspended, and even opposed by contrary sentiments; by coolness and indifference, by hatred or envy, arising from the defects of the  
pastor

(3) *Habbakkuk was instantly transported from Judea to Babylon.* He alludes to the history of Balaam and the Dragon, verse 36, where this quaint story is related. The sudden transport of the prophet has, however, this excellency, that it is of a piece with the rest of the history, which describes Daniel rather as a conjuror

than a prophet. It is said of the Lord, *He put forth the form of an hand, and took Ezekiel by a lock of his head, and brought him to Jerusalem:* but this was done *in the visions of God*, that is, the prophet dreamed that he was thus carried to Jerusalem. — *Ezek. viii. 3.*

pastor (for however able, he is not perfect) or from the depravity of the hearers. The same may be said of attention, although they ought to have it entirely for the divine truths, which the preacher speaks: yet, it is certain, they have it not; and all that a preacher can desire is, that his hearers have a general disposition to hear the gospel. The preacher must endeavour to give them a peculiar attention to such matters as he has to discuss. As to the rest, it must not be thought, that the bare reading of the text, or the connection, or the division only can produce that effect: a greater compass must be taken to move the human mind and apply the subject. And this also may be said of preparation, for which an exordium is principally designed. The reading of the text may do something, connection and division may contribute more; but all this without an exordium will be useless.

Nor is it difficult to answer the fourth reason, for, beside the advantages of an exordium, which are great enough to prevent our calling it lost time, its parts are ordinarily so short, that they cannot justly be accused of dissipating or fatiguing the hearers' minds. To which I add, that the exordium itself, if well chosen, will always contain agreeable and instructive matters, so that considered in itself something good is always to be learned from it.

We cannot approve then of the custom of the *English preachers*, who enter immediately into the literal explication of the text, and make it serve for an exordium, after which they divide their discourses into several parts, which they discuss as  
they



they go on. (4) Surely the hearer is not suddenly able to comprehend their explications, having yet neither

(4) *We cannot approve of the English custom.* Mr. Claude died on the 13th of January, 1687, leaving this piece in manuscript, which, we have supposed, vol. i. preface, p. 24, was written before 1676, that is to say, about the middle of the reign of Charles II. The English preachers, therefore, to whom he refers, must be they, who flourished about that time. It is always difficult to give general characters, it is particularly so in regard to the time, of which our author speaks; for there flourished at that period some of the best, and some of the worst preachers, that England ever had. Nothing can equal the absurdity of some, nothing can excel the piety, the judgment and the taste of others. However, the general running method, as Mr. Claude says, was a bad one. Many great truths were thrown together, and delivered to the people in a confused, clumsy manner. The parts of sermons were called by barbarous names, taken from obsolete treatises of logick. The fashionable book, studied then as a guide, was *Wilkin's Ecclesiastes*, which was first published in 1646, and had run

through six editions before this essay of Mr. Claude was written. The book contains rude outlines of composition, capable of great improvement.

The usual method, I think, was this. The first part *explained* the terms and subject-matter, removing the difficulties, and rendering the doctrine clear. The second part was *confirmation*, this consisted of scripture and reasoning. The third was *application*, pressing home the necessity, &c. Then followed their *collarys* as they termed them, sometimes twelve, sometimes twenty, and sometimes fifty. These were called *uses*, 1. Of *information*—2. Of *instruction*—3. Of *examination*—4. Of *reproof*—5. Of *encouragement*—6. Of *comfort*—7. Of *exhortation*—and so on.

Bp. Burnet, who first published his *Pastoral Care* in 1692, four years after the publication of this piece of Mr. Claude, though he discharges preaching from an enormous load of lumber, yet says, “ Sermons are reduced to the plain opening of the meaning of the text in a few short illustrations of its coherence with what goes before and after, and of the parts of which it is composed. To  
that

neither emotions nor preparation. Methinks, it would be much better gently to stir them up, and move them by something, which gives no pain, than to load them all on a sudden with an explication, which they can neither clearly comprehend, nor perhaps distinctly hear. (5)

Least

that is joined the clear stating of such propositions as arise out of it in their nature, truth, and reasonableness, by which the hearers may form clear notions of the several parts of religion, such as are best suited to their capacities and apprehensions. To all which applications are added, tending to the reproofing, directing, encouraging, and comforting the hearers." This is vague, and indeed it is only the old method new worded, and freed from the incumbrances of fathers, originals, councils, &c.

(5) *Auditors cannot clearly comprehend an explication on a sudden.* Mr. Claude supposes, that the mind is not prepared for divine subjects in the generality of hearers before they come, and that it is not likely they should be prepared by hearing the text, and the connection. This is in general true of all religious subjects, and it is a reason for the use of introductions: but there are some *difficult* subjects, to the understanding of which, I had almost said,

exordiums are essential. Dr. Calamy's sermons on the Trinity are nine in number, and from eight different texts: yet seven of these have no exordium at all. The third begins thus: "*Having, as was proposed, given scriptural proof of the Son's deity, and made a few remarks upon the deity that is ascribed to him in our sacred writings; I now proceed thirdly to offer something,*" &c. Can it be supposed, the hearers were so soon brought into a state of mind fit to enter on this profound subject?

Dr. Owen on Hab. iii. 1, &c. begins thus. "Of this chapter there are four parts. First, The title and preface, ver. 1. Secondly, The prophet's main request in it, ver. 2. Thirdly, Arguments to sustain his faith in that request, from verse 3 to 17. Fourthly, A resignation of himself and the whole issue of his desires unto God, from ver. 17 to the end. We shall treat of them in order." These four heads multiply into almost one hundred and fifty obser-

Least of all do we approve of the custom of some of our own preachers, who, intending to explain the text, or to make some reflections throughout the whole sermon, enter immediately into the matter without any Exordiums at all. I am persuaded, they are induced to do thus only for the sake of

observations, uses, reasons, &c. Ought not so abstruse an affair to have been introduced by an Exordium on patience and perseverance?"—*Dr. Owen's sermons, and tracts, fol. 238.*

*The people cannot distinctly hear the explication at first.* Most congregations are for a few minutes after prayer in a little sort of bustle, and the best way for the preacher to obtain audience is either to *pause* two or three minutes before he reads his text, till the people have seated themselves, and are still, or to *sing* one or two verses between prayer and sermon. Preachers, who know how to govern their voices, are always very cautious in uttering their first words, for if they pitch too high, they soon find themselves obliged to bawl out in disagreeable unnatural tones of speaking. Most begin low, and this is the only way to obtain audience, for it warns the people to listen, if they intend to hear: on the contrary, if a speaker sets off loud, they will not be afraid of making

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a noise, for they will think, they are sure to hear, make what noise they will. People, who come late, after the worship is begun, are great disturbers, and they ought either to leave off the lazy habit, or to sit down as soon as they get in at the door. Coughing, again, is another common disturbance. Just as the preacher is going to utter that one word, on which the sense of a whole period depends, out issues a cough from some wide mouth, that shakes all the air, prevents the hearing of five hundred attentive people, and gives half the house the head-ach. They, who have very bad coughs, should keep at home, they, who cough by rote, should be reprov'd, and they, who have colds, and yet think proper to attend a sermon, should cough into a handkerchief, and so lessen the noise. Every cough is a kind of attack on the preacher's voice, and it is miserable for him to stand up merely to be pelted. The most and best a publick speaker can do in such a case, is to

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utter

of avoiding the difficulty of composing an Exordium, that is, in one word, only for the sake of indulging their idleness and negligence. (6)

Taking

utter his sermon by periods, and, by making proper pauses between each, to give the people time to ease their lungs.

(6) *Some enter on the matter without any Exordium.* I suppose, Mr. Claude means, that Exordiums in general ought to be used: but not that they may never be omitted. Certainly it is as proper sometimes to omit an introduction as at other times to use one.

Quintilian, after giving rules for Exordiums, adds, “*Hæc de præmio quoties erit ejus usus: non semper autem est. Nam et supervacuum aliquando est, ut si sit præparatus satis etiam sine hoc judex: aut si res præparatione non egeat. Aristoteles quidem in totum id necessarium apud bonos judices negat. Quint. lib. iv. c. i.*

Διοπεραν δηλον η (i.e. τέλος τελογε) η μικρον το πραγμα, ε χρησεων προσωριμω.—*Arist. Rhet. l. iii. c. 14.*

See Cicero's second and third orations concerning Catiline, the beginnings of which are not so properly Exordiums as propositions, stating the purport of the whole orations.

Quintilian speaks so beau-

tifully, and so very aptly to the purpose, that I shall be forgiven for transcribing a few lines.

“*Nemo autem a me exigat id præceptorum genus, quod est a plerisque scriptoribus artium traditum, ut quasi quasdam leges immutabili necessitate conscriptas studiosis dicendi feram: utique præmii, et id quale: proxima huic narratio; quæ lex deinde narrandi: propositio post hanc, vel, ut quibusdam placuit, excursio: tum certus ordo quæstionum; cæteraque: quæ velut si aliter facere fas non sit, quidem tanquam jussi sequuntur. Erat enim rhetorice res prorsus facilis ac parva, si uno et brevi præscripto contineretur. Sed mutantur pleraque causis, temporibus, occasione, necessitate. Atque ideo res in oratore præcipua consilium est, quia varie, et ad rerum momenta convertitur.*

“*Quid enim si præcipias imperatori, quoties aciem instruet, ut dirigat frontem, cornua utrinque promoveat, equites pro cornibus locet? Erit hæc quidem rectissima fortasse ratio, quoties licebit: sed mutabitur natura loci, si mons occurret, si flumen ob-*  
stabit,



Taking it for granted then that an *Exordium* must be used, it may be asked, what are the principal benefits we expect to receive from them? And with what general views ought they to be composed? In answer, we say, the principal design of an *Exordium* is to attract or excite the *affections* of the audience—to stir up their *attention*—and to *prepare* them for the particular matters, of which we are about to treat. (7)

The two first of these must only be proposed *indirectly*. A preacher would render himself ridiculous, if in ordinary discourses, and without cases of extreme necessity, he should *labour* by this mean to acquire the esteem and affection of his congregation. This method would be more likely to make them rather despise than esteem him.

You must not then compliment the people, nor praise yourself, nor indeed speak of yourself in any manner

stabit, si collibus, sylvis, asperitateve aliqua prohibebitur.” In short, he reduces all to *Quid deceat*, and *Quid expediat*, and of these every man can best judge for himself. *Quint. inst. lib. ii. cap. xiv.*

(7) *Introductions are intended to excite affection and attention. and to prepare the auditor for the subject.* “Causa principii nulla alia est, quam ut auditorum quo sit nobis in cæteris partibus accommodatior, præparemus. Id fieri tribus maxime rebus, inter actores plurimos constat, si *benevolum, attentum, docilem*

fecerimus: non quia ista per totam actionem non sint cultodienda, sed quia in initiis maxime necessaria, per quæ in animum judicis, ut procedere ultra possimus admittimur.” *Quint. inst. lib. iv. cap. i.*

“Ubique curandum ut res afferantur novæ et variæ, inque præsentibus futurorum semina adspargantur: quo ita auditoris animus detineatur quasi suspensus, et ad sequentia magis festinet. *Vossius inst. poet. l. iii. c. v.*

Το μὲν οὖν ἀναγκαϊοτάτον ἐργον τῆ προομιᾶς ἢ ἰδίον τετο, δηλωσαι τι ἐστὶ το τέλος τῆ ἐνεκα ο λογος.—

manner of way. (8) These are affectations, which never succeed, and yet some able preachers slip into this weakness, especially when they preach to strange congregations, and above all when they address assemblies of the rich, the learned, or the noble.

Then they never fail to interlard their Exordiums with some common place saws—either the pleasure it gives them to be called to that pulpit—or an affectation of self-contempt—a confession of their great weakness—or something of this kind. To speak my opinion freely, I think these are pendent

*Aristot. Rhet. lib. iii. c. xiv. de proœmiis.*

(8) *Do not compliment or flatter the people.* Whence is flattery to be banished, if suffered to stalk in the pulpit? a place where every species of insincerity ought to be reprobated, if for no other reason, yet lest the hearers should infer what the Corinthians did from Paul's non-fulfilment of his promise to visit them. That is, that the gospel is *yea, yea, and nay, nay.* Comp. 1 Cor. xvi. 5. 2 Cor. i. 15, 16, 17, 18.

No men so subject to this false and fulsome flattery as the French popish preachers, especially in their *funeral orations.* The Bishop of Meaux, in his funeral oration for the Duchess of Orleans, closes his Exordium with these words, addressed to the Duke : “ These are truths, which I

have thought worthy of being proposed to so great a prince, and to the most illustrious assembly in the universe.” Could Bossuet be ignorant that this princess was poisoned by order of the Duke for being too intimate with his brother Lewis 14th? Did not he know what pains her confessor took to keep it from the English ambassador Montague? Was he only a stranger to the intrigues of Lewis to prevent a rupture with Charles the second on the account of it? How dare he call such an assembly the *most illustrious in the universe?* How could he call such a criminal *so great a prince,* in the house of that God, in whose eyes a *vile person is abhorred?*

In his oration for the Queen of Charles the first of England, he says, “ It would be needless to say much on the glorious

dantick airs, which have a very bad effect. Sensible auditors do not like to hear such fantastical pretences,

ous birth of this princess. We see nothing under the sun which equals its grandeur. St. Gregory gave in the first ages this singular encomium of the crown of France. *It is as far above all other crowns in the world, as the royal dignity surpasses a private patrimony.* If this was said in the time of King Childebart, if the Merovingian race was exalted to this height, judge what his holiness would have said of the blood of St. Lewis, and Charles the great. Issued from this race, daughter of Henry the great, and of so many kings, her magnanimity was superior to her birth." &c.

*Judge what his holiness would have said of the blood of S. Lewis! . . . No. . . Judge what a fordid court chaplain would say for a bishoprick! Bossuet. orais. funeb.*

Rollin says, "Bossuet's orations, of Henrietta of France, Queen of England, and that of the Duchess of Orleans, are full of thoughts, which Hermogenes calls majestic, which carry their conviction with them, forcibly seize the judgment, move our passions, and fire our souls." He quotes a part of this very passage to prove it. *Belles lettres. ii. 3. 2.*

An able critick says, "On the contrary, this funeral oration upon the Duchess of Orleans is a perfect hodge podge of chearful and melancholy representations." &c. *Elem. crit. vol. i. ch. viii.*

Even the charming Bishop of Clermont falls into this dangerous snare in almost all his funeral orations. In that for Lewis XIV. he says: "This king was the terror of his neighbours, the astonishment of the universe, the father of kings, greater than all his ancestors, *more magnificent than Solomon in all his glory.*——The world was dazzled with the glory, that surrounded him, enemies envied his power, strangers came from the most distant islands to veil their faces before the glory of his majesty, his subjects were ready to erect altars to him, and the illusions, that were around him, seduced all except himself."——How truly is it said, *nemo omnibus bonis sapit!* *Massil. orais. funeb.*

I mention these occasions, rather than any other, because this fault prevails most with us in *funeral sermons*, in which lies are lavished, with the utmost profusion, common abilities exalted to apostolical, common duties to unexampled piety,

tences, which are both contrary to the gravity of the pulpit, and to the decency of a modest man. (9)

How then, you will ask, must the *affections* of the hearers be attracted? I answer, *indirectly*, by an Exordium well chosen, and well spoken, and this is the surest way of succeeding.

In regard to *attention*, it is certain, it ought to be awakened, and fixed in the same manner, that is, by something agreeable, and worthy of being heard, a composition of piety and good sense. I do not disapprove of asking sometimes for attention,

piety, and common afflictions to the pains of martyrdom, vices are extenuated, virtues exaggerated, the whole world the worse for the loss of—They remind us of a French writer, who, censuring a very different practice, but which affects *all nature* too, says, “*The priests dance, the soldiers dance, the gods dance, the devils dance,*” &c.

(9) *Pedantick airs are contrary to modesty.* “It is a matter of experience, that congruity or propriety, wherever perceived, is agreeable; and that incongruity or impropriety, wherever perceived,

is disagreeable.—Nothing is more intimately related to a man, than his sentiments, words and actions; and therefore we require here the strictest conformity. When we find what we thus require, we have a lively sense of propriety: when we find the contrary, our sense of impropriety is not less lively. Hence the universal distaste of *affectedness*, which consists in making a shew of greater delicacy and refinement, than is suited either to the character or circumstances of the person.” *Elem. crit. vol. i. c. x.*

Hence Shakespear properly enough to our purpose.

“But good my brother,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
Shew me the steep and thorny way to heav’n,  
Whilst like a puffed and careless libertine,  
Himself the primrose paths of dalliance treads  
And reckes not his own reed.”—That is, regards  
not his own doctrine.

*Hamlet.*

“Fre-



tion, either on account of the importance of the matter, the solemnity of the day, the state of the church, or, in short, of any other particular occasion: but it must not be done often, for then it would never be minded, and when it is done the fewer words the better. (1)

The

“Frequentissime vero promium decebit et sententiarum, et compositionis, et vocis, et vultus *modestia*: adeo ut in genere causæ etiam indubitabili, fiducia se ipsa ni-

mium exerere non debeat. Odit enim iudex fere litigantis securitatem. cumque jus suum intelligat, tacitus reverentiam postulat.”—*Quint. lib. iv. c. i.*

Μύθων τε φητὶς ἔμεναι, πρηνετῆρά τε ἔργων.

Verborum que orator ut esset, actor que rerum.

*Hom. Iliad. ix. l. 443.*

(1) *You may sometimes ask for attention.* A prudent preacher will soon observe when this is proper. *He, that bath ears to hear, let him hear.* Mat. xi. 15.—*Hear, and understand.* Mat. xv. 10.—*Hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men.* Isaiah xxviii. 14.—*Hearken, O Israel, to the statutes I teach you.* Deut. iv. 1.—*Hearken, O people, every one of you.* 1 Kings xxii. 28.—*Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken.* Acts vii. 2. The most usual, easy, and natural method seems a brief *allocution*. Thus the Athenians Ἀνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, used also by S. Paul in the Arcopagus, Acts xvii. 22.—So the Romans, *Quirites*—and so the Jews, *Ye men of Judea*—We have spoken of these before. Page 172, 173.

The fathers, about the time

of Chrysostom, made use of what some have called *præexordia*, and, they thought, they derived the custom from the apostles. Paul begins his epistles with *Grace and peace be with you from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. In imitation of this, when a father ascended the pulpit, he used to pause a moment, and then say, *Peace be with you all!*—or *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!* or something of this kind. In return the people answered, *And with thy spirit!* And then he entered on his sermon. “Non incipit aliquid episcopus ad populum dicere, nisi prius in nomine Dei populum salutaverit.”—*Optat. Milev. Append. lib. vii.—Niceph. Hist. xiv. 23.—Chrysost. ad Coloss. Hom. iii.*

The *principal use* of an Exordium is to *prepare* the hearer's mind for the particular matters you have to treat of, and insensibly to conduct him to it. If this end be not obtained, the Exordium cannot but be impertinent; and, on the contrary, if this end be answered, the Exordium cannot be improper.

When I say, the hearer's mind must be prepared for, and conducted to the matter, I mean to say, these are two different things. You *prepare* the hearer for the matter, when you stir up in him such *dispositions* as he ought to have to hear well, and to profit much. You insensibly *conduct* your hearer to the matter, when by the natural connection of the subjects of which you speak, you lead him from one thing to another, and enable him to enter into the doctrine of your sermon.

Let us advert a moment to each. The *preparation* must be determined by the subject, of which you are going to speak; for if it be a sad and afflicting subject, in which you aim to excite the compassion, the grief, and the tears of your audience, you must begin the Exordium by imparting such a disposition. (2)

If

(2) *Impart the disposition which you would excite.* Would you affect your auditors? be affected yourself. Would you excite their grief? weep yourself. Nothing can be more natural than this method, yet nothing requires greater delicacy. These emotions must not be acted, they must be free and natural. They cannot be acted, they may be affected: but the af-

fection will be discovered, and it will excite the contempt of the hearers, they will think the preacher a hypocrite, who aims to impose on them.

The best method seems to be that, which the most popular and pious preachers use. They study till they thoroughly understand the subject. They habitually feel it. They retire ten minutes before

If you have to treat of a profound and difficult mystery, aim to diffuse elevation and admiration among the hearers. If some terrible example of God's justice be the subject, endeavour to stir up fear. If some enormous crime, prepare the mind for horror by a meditation on the enormity of human corruption. If you have to treat of repentance, and in an extraordinary manner to interest your hearers in it, you must begin to dispose them to it by general ideas of God's wrath, which we have deserved—of the little fruit we have borne to his glory—or something of a like nature. If, on the contrary, the matter you have to treat of be common and tranquil, aim in your Exordium to place the mind in its natural state, and only endeavour to excite honest and christian tempers, which we all ought always to have. In a word, the Exordium must always participate the spirit of the subject, that you mean to discuss, in order to dispose your hearers for it. Not to use in this manner, is to lose all the benefit of an Exordium: and to use it to an opposite purpose would be to renounce common sense, and to act like an idiot. (3)

The

before preaching, and in fervent prayer to God, possess their souls with a full idea of the importance of the matter, of which they are going to treat. They go from prayer to the pulpit, as Moses went down from the mount from God to speak to the people. This was the primitive use of one of those little rooms, which were always added to places of worship. The *sacristy* was that, in which the utensils of

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divine worship were kept. The *vestry* was that, in which the ministers' vestments were kept. Where there is only one vestry, and the preacher has no other convenient room at hand, this should be left free for his use before worship begins.

(3) *An Exordium is intended to prepare the hearers.* It may happen, the hearers may be *previously* prepared, by some awful, or pleasing circumstances,

The second use of an introduction is to *conduct* the hearer gradually to the subject, of which you are about to treat. This (as I have said) depends on the connection between the subjects of the Exordium with themselves, and with the matter of the discussion. I say first with *themselves*, for they must, as it were, hold each other by the hand, and have a mutual dependence and subordination, otherwise the auditor will be surprized to find himself suddenly transported from one topic to another. I say also with the *discussion*, for the Exordium is principally intended to introduce that.

The first quality of an Exordium is *brevity*. This, however, has a proper measure, for as it ought not to be excessively long, so neither should it be too short, the middle way is best. The longest exordium may have ten or twelve periods, and the shortest six or seven, provided the periods be not too long. The reason, is, that on the one hand, proper time may be given the hearer to prepare himself to hear you with attention, and to follow you in the discussion of the matter; and, on the other, that in giving time sufficient for that, you may prevent his wandering out of the subject, wearying himself, and becoming impatient. If the Exordium were too short, it would oblige the hearer to enter too soon into the matter without preparation enough; and excessive length would weary him, for it is with an auditor, as with a man who visits a palace, he  
does

stances, some publick event, or no need of an exordium to  
some particular case known prepare.  
to the auditors; then there is



does not like to stay too long in the court, or first avenues, he would only view them transiently without stopping, and proceed as soon as possible to gratify his principal curiosity. (4)

2. An Exordium must be *clear*, and consequently disengaged from all sorts of abstruse and metaphysical thoughts. It should be expressed in natural and popular terms, and not overcharged with matter. Indeed, as the auditors are neither enlivened nor moved yet, you must not expect of them at first a great degree of penetration and elevation, nor even a great attempt towards these, though they may be capable of them, when they are animated. You must, therefore, in an Exordium, avoid all that can give pain to the mind, such as physical questions, long trains of reasoning, and such like. However, do not imagine that, under pretence of great clearness, an Exordium must have only theological matter, or consist rather of words than things. This would be falling into the other extreme. An Exordium, then, must contain matter capable of nourishing and satisfying the mind, to  
do

(4) *Exordiums must be of moderate length.* “*Ridendi vero, qui velut leges proœmiis omnibus dederunt, ut intra quatuor sensus terminarentur. Nec minus evitanda est immodica ejus longitudo, ne in caput excrevisse videatur, et quo præparare debet, fatiget.*”—*Quint. l. iv. c. i.*

“In particular, long periods ought to be avoided till the reader’s attention be thoroughly engaged; and there-

fore a discourse, especially of the familiar kind, ought never to be introduced with a long period.—An example of this fault is in the commencement of Cicero’s oration, *pro Archia poeta.*”—*El. of Crit. c. xviii.*

It is impossible to insert examples at length here: but there are abundance of very beautiful ones in many modern English sermons, in every body’s hands.

do which they must be clear, easy to comprehend, and expressed in a very natural manner. (5)

3. An Exordium must be *cool and grave*. Consequently no grand figures may be admitted, as apostrophes, violent exclamations, reiterated interrogations, nor, in a word, any thing that tends to give vehement emotions to the hearers; for, as the discourse must be accommodated to the state of the hearer, he in the beginning being cool, and free from agitations, the speaker ought to be so too. (6)

No

(5) *Exordiums must be clear.* “In cæteris artibus id maxime excellit, quod longissime sit ab imperitorum intelligentia sensuque disjunctum; in dicendo autem vitium vel maximum est, a vulgari genere orationis atque a consuetudine communis sensus abhorrere.”—*Cic. de Orat. l. i.*

Quintilian from Livy speaks of a master, who used to direct his pupils to render their compositions difficult, and when they complained, they were obscure and unintelligible, *So much the better*, says he, *I don't understand them myself.*

(6) *An Exordium must be cool.* Mr. Claude's rule is undoubtedly good in general, and his reason weighty. An author, often quoted in these notes, agrees with him. “Vida, following Horace, recommends a modest commencement of an epic poem; giving for a reason, that the wri-

ter ought to husband his fire. This reason has weight, but there is a reason still more weighty; bold thoughts and figures are never relished till the mind be heated and thoroughly engaged, which is not the reader's case at the commencement. Homer introduces not a single simile in the first book of the Iliad, nor in the first book of the Odyssey.”—*Elem. Crit. vol. ii. c. 21.*

This, however, is a rule sometimes dispensed with. Cicero begins one oration thus. “Jamne vides, bellua, jamne sentis, quæ sit hominum querela frontis tuæ?” Another thus. “Quonam meo fato, P. C. fieri dicam, ut nemo his annis viginti reipublicæ hostis fuerit, qui non bellum eadem tempore mihi quoque indixerit?” Another thus. “Quousque tandem abutere, Catalina patientia nostra? Quamdiu etiam furor

No wise man will approve Exordiums full of enthusiasms, and poetical raptures, full of impetuous or angry emotions, or of bold interrogations, or surprizing paradoxes to excite admiration. (7)

You

furor iste tuus nos illudet? Quem ad finem sese effrenata jactabit audacia?" &c. He therefore wisely varied his method as he saw reason. Thus himself expresses it. "Etsi, Quirites, non est meæ consuetudinis, initio dicendi rationem reddere qua de causa quemque defendam—tamen in hac defensione," &c.—*Ciceron. Orat. in Piso—in Ant. Phil. 2.—in Cat. 1.—pro Rabirio.*

Flechier begins a funeral oration thus. "With what design, Sirs, are you assembled here, and what idea have you of my ministry? Am I come to dazzle you with the glory of terrestrial honours and dignities? Do you come to interrupt your attention?" &c.—*Flechier Oraif. Funeb. de M. Le Tellier.*

Fenelon thus. "Blessed be God, my brethren, who has this day put his word into my mouth to bless and praise the work which he accomplishes in this house. I own I have long wished to pour out my

Virgil of the last,

Ventum erat ad limen, cum virgo: poscere fata  
Tempus ait: Deus, ecce, Deus. Cui talia fanti  
Ante fores, subito non vultus, non color unus,

heart before these altars—It is then in a transport of joy that I speak."—*Oeuvres phil. tom. ii. ser. 1.*

Saurin thus. "Can you have patience with us once more, if we proceed in drawing the sad picture of your miseries?"—*Saur. Ser. tom. iv. ser. 9.*

None of these are cool exordiums, yet none of them appear improper. Mr. Claude's rule is good in general, on particular occasions, it seems, it may be laid aside.

(7) *Enthusiasms.* Mr. Claude means all violent transports of passion, such as those, with which the poets and Delphian priestesses were inflamed, which violently agitated the bodies of the latter in delivering their oracles; and which so powerfully animate the descriptions of the former. Plato speaks of the first. 'Οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἡ μουσα ἐν-  
θεοῦς μὲν ποιεῖ αὐτὴ, διὰ δὲ τῶν  
ἐνθεῶν τούτων ἀλλῶν ἐνθουσια-  
ζόντων, ὁρμαδὸς ἐξαετᾶται. *Plat. in Ione.*

Non

You must in the beginning speak gently, remembering that your auditors are neither yet in heaven, nor in the air, nor at all elevated in their way thither, but upon earth, and in a place of worship. (8)

## 4. An

Non comptæ mansêre comæ: sed pectus anhelum,  
 Et rabie fera corda tument; majorque videri,  
 Nec mortale sonans: afflata est numine quando  
 Jam propiore Dei.

Virg. *Æneid.* v. 45.

Very likely, the heathens, used long to consider distortions as evidences of inspiration, and observing that convulsions were common at the approach of death; conceived the notion of men's prophesying just before their departure. However that be, this we may depend upon, twang, and tautology, distortions, and convulsions, are no certain indications of divine assistance. Scripture-enthusiasm is conformity to the blessed God. 1 John iv. 12, 13. It is espousing God's interest (if I may so speak) in God's own way. Had truth always been propagated by love, the word enthusiasm would have retained its primitive idea, that is, it would always have been taken in a good sense: but now, its friends have mistaken the thing, and its enemies the name.

For example, A pamphlet published in 1655 by some, who were imprisoned at Norwich for matters of conscience, in answer to a

clergyman of that city, who printed against them, is intitled, "*Ishmael and his mother cast out into the wilderness, among the wild beasts of the same nature.* Or a reply to a book put forth by one of Ishmael's children, who calls himself a minister of the gospel, but is clearly made manifest by *the light of God in his servants* to be a scoffer, and enemy of the gospel, which *the saints of God* suffer for.—*Given forth from the spirit of the Lord in us*—whose names in the flesh are." &c.—This child of Ishmael is addressed by these inspired saints thus, *Shame cover thy face thou full of rottenness and filthy dreams, what hast thou to do, thou dreamer, to profess thyself a minister of the gospel, who art but yet in thy mediate natural conceivings.*"—God forbid, we should justify the imprisonment of men for conscience-fake; but, in good earnest, do such men think themselves inspired?

(8) *If you are in the clouds,*  
*your*



4. An Exordium, however, ought not to be so cool and grave, as not to be at the same time *engaging and agreeable*. (9) There are three principal ends, which a preacher should propose, to instruct, to please, and to affect: but, of these three, that which should reign in an Exordium is to please. I own, you should also aim to instruct and affect: but less to instruct than to please, and less still

*your auditors are upon earth.*

Our author rallies the enthusiast. Sallust's remark is very just on this occasion as well as on writing history; the hearers, observing the preacher's vehemence, and despairing of attaining the like, will condemn him, and perhaps distress themselves. "Ac mihi quidem, tametsi haudquaquam par gloria sequatur scriptorem, et actorem rerum: tamen in primis arduum videtur, res gestas scribere: primum quod facta dictis exequanda sunt; dein quia plerique, quæ delicta reprehenderis, malevolentia et invidia, dicta putant, ubi de magna virtute, atque gloria bonorum memores; quæ sibi quisque facilia factu putet, æquo animo accipit; supra, veluti ficta pro falsis ducit." *Sal. Bel. Catal. exord.*

(9) *Exordiums must be agreeable.*—What Quintilian says of narration agrees exactly with Mr. Claude, "Quantum opus est autem, non ita solum accipi volo, quantum ad indicandum sufficit, quia non inornata debet esse brevitatis, alioqui sit indocta: nam et fallit voluptas, et minus longa quæ delectant videntur: ut amœnum et molle iter, etiamsi est spatii amplioris, minus fatigat quam durum arduumque compendium. Nec enim mihi unquam tanta fuerit cura brevitatis, ut non ea quæ credibilem faciunt expositionem, inferi velim. Simplex enim, et undique præcisa, non tam narratio potest vocari, quam confusio." *Quint. inst. lib. iv. cap. 2.*

"Altum aliis assurgat opus; tu nocte dieque  
Exiguum meditator; ubi sint omnia culta,  
Et visenda novis iterumque iterumque figuris.  
Quod si longarum cordi magis ampla viarum  
Sunt spatia, angustis cum res tibi finibus arcta,  
In longum trahito arte; viæ tibi mille trahendi,  
Mille modi:" &c.

*Vida de art. poet. l. ii. c. 339.*

still to affect than to instruct. Indeed, if you can judiciously and properly introduce any thing tender into an Exordium (especially on extraordinary occasions) you may to good purpose: but, be that as it may, the agreeable should reign in this part. You easily see by this that you must banish from the Exordium all ill-natured censures, terrible threatenings, bitter reproaches, and in general all that favours of anger, contempt, hatred, or indifference, and in short every thing that has the air of quarrelling with the hearers. (1) Their attention

(1) *Avoid every thing that has the air of quarrelling with the hearers.* It must be allowed, some weak passionate men have grievously offended their auditors in this way, and a great imprudence it is. It is unmanly to accuse where decency forbids the accused to answer. It never produces any good effects, either in the accused, or in other hearers; and it always sinks the preacher's reputation with both. The former are provoked, the latter are filled with pity or contempt. It betrays a total want of self-government, and exhibits nothing but passion and revenge, and these in a place, from whence, of all others in the world, they ought to be for ever excluded. However, where these sad cases have happened, the good people should overlook them, and remember their minister is but a man.

There is a sort of loose living hearers, whose ill-turned minds give an ugly cast to all the discourses of the most undesigning preacher. These people know they deserve reproof, and they imagine every reproof given in the course of a man's labours is pointed at them. What is the good minister to do? There is a method to avoid giving offence to this sort of people, but a faithful preacher dare not use it. What should we think of a pastor, who should give publick notice, that, as he desired to give offence to none, and as he had reason to believe many of his congregation lived in some practices, which they would not choose to hear reproofed, he would oblige them by omitting to censure all such practices; and that, in order to ascertain these, he would always sit in the vestry half

tion must not only be excited, you may sufficiently do so by censures and reproaches : but you must softly insinuate yourself into their esteem, so that they may not only not oppose what you say, but be well satisfied you are an honest and well-meaning man. (2)

5. *The whole of the exordium must be naturally connected with all the matter of the text.* I say first the *whole* of the *exordium*, for great care must be taken to put nothing there foreign to your subject: therefore the best exordiums are those, which are composed of two propositions, the first of which is naturally and immediately connected with the second, and the second naturally and immediately with the text. Each of these propositions may be either proved, or amplified: but the last must always conduct you with ease to the subject in question, nor

half an hour before preaching to receive such lists of errors and vices as they would please to have spared? Could honest Micaiah have done so, even Ahab would not have exclaimed, *I hate him, for he never prophesieth good unto me.* 2 Chron. xviii. 7.

(2) *Satisfy your hearers, that you are a well-meaning man.*

Hence Quintilian so much insists on his orator's being a *good* man. The whole first chapter of his twelfth book is spent in proving the necessity of this; and, if this be so needful at the bar, how much more so is it in the pulpit! His conclusion is enough to

make a christian minister blush. "*Men had better be born dumb, and even destitute of reason, than pervert those gifts of providence to pernicious purposes.* Mutos enim nasci, et egere omni ratione satius fuisset, quam providentiæ munera in mutuam perniciem convertere." Quint. l. xii. c. i.

"Ad docilitatem autem reducere hæc omnia poterit si quis velit atque illud etiam ut quis vir probus appareat. Istiusmodi enim viris libentius attendere consueverunt." Arist. Rhet. lib. iii. cap. xiv. de præmio.

nor must the first be very distant. According to this maxim, all exordiums must be condemned, which, instead of leading you into the text, make you as it were tumble from a precipice into it, which is intolerable. Those also are to be condemned, which conduct to the text by many long circuits, that is, by many propositions chained together, which is certainly vicious, and can only fatigue the hearer. I add in the second place, the exordium must be connected with the *whole* matter of the *text*. It ought not merely to relate to one of its parts, (or to one view only, if you intend to consider it in different views) but to all. One of the principal uses of an exordium is to prepare the mind of the hearer for the matter to be discussed. If, therefore, the exordium refer only to one of its parts, or to one view only, it will prepare the mind of the hearer for that one part, for that one view only, and not for the rest. (3)

6. An

(3) *Your whole exordium must be connected with the whole text.* “We are framed by nature to relish order and connection. When an object is introduced by a proper connection, we are conscious of a certain pleasure arising from that circumstance.—Every work of art that is conformable to the natural course of our ideas, is so far agreeable; and every work of art that reverses that course is so far disagreeable. Hence it is required in every such work, that, like an organic system, its parts should be orderly arranged and mutually connected, bearing each of them a relation to the whole, some more intimate, some less, according to their destination: When due regard is had to these particulars, we have a sense of just composition, and so far are pleased with the performance.—The two prefaces of Sallust, look as if they had been prefixed by some blunder to his two histories: they will suit any other history as well, or any subject as well as history. Even the members of these prefaces are but loosely connected:



6. An Exordium *must be simple*. We would not entirely banish figures : on the contrary, we would always employ such as may render the discourse pleasant and agreeable : but pompous and magnificent expressions must be avoided, as far as the things spoken will permit. Do not use a style too elevated, bordering on bombast—nor periods too harmonious—nor overstrained allegories—nor even metaphors too common or too bold, for indeed the hearer's mind, yet cool and in its natural state, can bear nothing of this kind. (4)

7. An exordium *must not be common*. As this is a rule much abused, it will be needful to explain it. By a common exordium, I do not mean an exordium,

needed : they look more like a number of maxims or observations than a connected discourse." *Elem. of crit. vol. i. c. i.*

(4) This direction of Mr. Claude's is so nearly allied to what he says on the *third* property of an exordium, that is, that it should be *cool and grave*, that I shall refer the reader to that, only begging leave to say a word on *harmonious periods*, about which he advises not to be too nice.

The harmony of a period flows from the proper arrangement of the words and sentences, of which the period is composed. This art was invented by the Greeks, carried to a great degree of perfection by the Romans, abused awhile, and at length

quite lost : till, after the reformation, with other branches of ancient polite learning it revived : but it has not been carried to any great perfection with us. Our fashion is the *clear*, and not the musical.

Wonderful are the prejudices of some against it, it is thought too trifling for a grave mind, and it is said, a good ear is worth a thousand rules.

Indeed, it should seem, it is an art too trifling for the *pulpit* : but in all other productions, and even in some *printed sermons*, it has inconceivable charms. In *poetry*, it is intolerable not to attend to it. Pronounce the two following, and try the contrast :

exordium, which will suit many texts ; for, if the texts are parallel, and the subject be managed with the same views, and in the same circumstances, what occasion is there to compose different exordiums ? By a common exordium, I mean, in the first place, one taken from trivial things, and which have been said over and over again ; these the people already know, and your labour will be infallibly thrown away. Such are exordiums taken from comparisons of the sun—of kings—of conquerors—of the ancient Romans, &c.—or from some histories of the Old Testament, which have

“ I’ll cast him down as deep  
As Tartarus (the brood of night) where Barathrum doth steep  
Torment in his profoundest sinks ; where is the floor of brass  
And gates of iron : the place for depth as far doth hell surpass,  
As heaven for height exceeds the earth.”

This is insufferably harsh. The following is as soft :

“ Teach me to feel another’s woe,  
To hide the fault I see ;  
That mercy I to others show  
That mercy show to me.  
If I am right, O teach my heart  
Still in the right to stay ;  
If I am wrong, thy grace impart  
To find that better way.”

Can any man be insensible to the majestick and melodious gravity of the first verses of St. John ? (Mr. Mason, in his *Essay on the Power and Harmony of Prosaic numbers*, has thus measured them. *chap. viii.*)

In the be|gīnning wās | the  
wōrd, | ānd the wōrd | wās  
wīth Gōd, | ānd the wōrd |  
wās Gōd. | The sāme | wās in  
the | be|gīn|ning wīth Gōd.

Every ear must feel a difference, and though true wisdom may be conveyed under very disagreeable sounds, yet how desirable is it to have sound and sense agree !

With us, this kind of knowledge is most useful in reading the scriptures in publick, or in giving out the psalm or hymn. There are some lines in our psalms and hymns, in which the reader must either sacrifice

have been often repeated—or of some well-known types, as the Israelites passage through the Red Sea—and many more of the same kind. In the second place, I mean, by a common or general exordium, one, which may be alike applied to two texts of different matter, or to two contrary interpretations

sacrifice *sound* or *sense*, for he will find he cannot preserve both. A good reader of a hymn in publick worship will edify the people by giving out line by line, for he will sound so as to explain and enforce the sense: but unless the hymn can be well sounded by him, who gives it out, it would be better only to name the psalm to be sung, read only the first line, and let the people sing on. This is the method used in foreign

churches: but they, who cannot read, old people, whose eyes are dim, and the poor, who have no books, cannot sing. If, then, the hymn be read line by line, great care should be taken to choose expressive ones, and great decency and propriety should be regarded in giving them out. They say, had David heard some men read some of his psalms, he would have gone mad.

“ Expression is the dress of thought, and still  
Appears more decent as more suitable :  
A low conceit in pompous words express’d,  
Is like a clown in regal purple dress’d,  
For different *sounds*, with different subjects fort,  
As sev’ral garbs with country, town, and court.”

*Pope on Critic.*

This subject is handled with great accuracy by Mr. Mason in the above quoted piece, and many easy and excellent rules given to publick speakers in his *Essay on Elocution*, which, however insignificant they may appear to some called preachers, are not beneath the notice of any man, learned, or unlearned, who would be heard with pleasure.

“ If this science (says he) be subject to abuse, (and what is not ?) does it therefore deserve contempt? If fools and fops sometimes appear in rich and gay attire, that is no reason that a man of sense should be a sloven.”  
*On the power of prosaic numb.*  
*chap. x.*

interpretations of the same text. It is in this sense that common exordiums are vicious and distasteful.

8. Even in metaphorical or figurative texts, it is quite puerile to make an exordium join the text by a metaphor; for, whatever ingenuity there may seem to be in it, it is certain, there is no taste, no judgment discovered in the practice, and, however it may pass in college-declamations, it would appear too trifling in a gospel-pulpit. The exordium, then, must be connected with the text by the matter itself, that is, by the *subject* intended to be conveyed by the figure, and not by the figure. I would not, however, forbid the joining of the exordium to the text sometimes by the figure, provided it be done in a chaste and prudent manner.

Let us give one example. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.* John vi. 54. An exordium to a sermon from this text may be taken from the idea, which holy scripture teaches us to form of our conversion, as if it were a *new birth*, which begins a new life—that for this purpose, it speaks of a new *man*, a new *heaven*, which illuminates, and a new *earth*, which supports him—that, attributing to this new man the same *senses*, which nature has formed in us, as sight, hearing, feeling, smelling, tasting; it attributes also to him *objects* proportioned to each of these mystical senses, and ascribes to them *effects* like those, which our senses produce by their natural operations.—It tells us—that our *eyes* contemplate the *cælestial light*, which illuminates and guides us in the ways of righteousness—that our *ears* hear the *voice* of God, who calls us, and who  
by



by these means makes us obey our vocation.—It tells us that the gospel is a *savour* of life, which communicates salvation to us.—And finally, it attributes to us a *mouth* to eat the *flesh*, and drink the *blood* of the Son of God, in order to nourish us to life eternal. It is this last expression, which Jesus Christ has made use of in the sixth of John, and which says in my text, *he, that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.*

This exordium joins itself to the text by the figure made use of in the text, but in such a manner as not to be chargeable with affectation, or witticism; for it is by a serious reflection on the *scripture use* of the figure, acknowledging it to be a figure, and *preparing* the hearer to attend to the explication.

To these rules, I subjoin a word or two on the *vices* of exordiums. 1. There are some preachers, who imagine it a fine thing to take exordiums from the persons of their hearers, or the circumstances of times, places, general affairs, or news of the world: but I believe this is altogether a vicious method, and should never be used but on extraordinary occasions. First, there is too much *affectation* in it. Is it not a vain parade to begin a discourse with things, which have no relation to the matter? It is certainly contrary to the chastity and modesty of a christian-pulpit. Secondly, exordiums of this sort are usually pulled in by head and shoulders. How should it be otherwise, when the articles, of which they are composed, have, if any, only a very distant relation to the text? By such means you defeat the principal design of an exordium, which is to prepare the hearers minds, and to conduct them insensibly to the

the subject. And finally, it is very difficult in such exordiums to avoid saying impertinencies; for what in a publick discourse can be more indelicate than to speak of yourself, or hearers, or times, or news? In my opinion, such exordiums ought to be entirely rejected. (5)

2. You must also, for the most part, reject exordiums taken from profane history, or what they call the apothegms of illustrious men. (6) This method favours too much of the college, and is by no means in the taste of pious well bred men. Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey, all the great names of antiquity have no business to ascend a gospel-pulpit, and, if they are not suffered now-a-days, either in orations in the senate, or in pleas at

(5) *By vicious exordiums the principal design of an exordium is defeated.* “Nec minus diligenter, ne suspecti simus in ulla parte, vitandum; propter quod minime ostentari debet in principiis cura, quia videtur ars omnis dicentis contra judicem adhiberi. Sed ipsum est evitare, summæ artis.” *Quint. lib. iv. de Exord.*

(6) *The apothegms of illustrious men should seldom appear in a sermon.* We may venture to add, they should never appear without peculiar discernment in the choice, and peculiar propriety in the application. A famous Jesuit expositor relates a remarkable saying of Augustus, applies it to S. Peter, and thus spouts

away. “*Urbem Romam ita excoluit Augustus, ut jure sit gloriatus, marmoream se relinquere, quam lateritiam accepisset.* Meliori jure gloriari potest multo Augustior Augusto Petrus, cœlestem se fecisse Romam, quam Tartaro addictam invenit. Petri enim in terris Dei vices gerentis, cœlesti cathedra, cœlestibusque clavibus, ita est adornata, ut cœlestis, potius urbs, quam terrestris merito debeat appellari. Dabat olim orbi jura terrena, nunc jura dat cœlestia; in corpora dominatum olim obtinebat, nunc obtinet in ipsos etiam animos; ligabat olim, ac solvebat ferreis compedibus carnem, nunc ligat solvitque spiritualibus vinculis spiritus. Lateritiam

Romam

at the bar; much less ought they to be allowed in christian sermons. It may not be amiss, if they appear now and then in the discussion, or in the application: but even there we ought to see them but seldom, not oftener than once a year at most: but to introduce them at the beginning of a sermon

Romam accepit, marmoream, immo auream reddidit Petri cathedra." Ah Father! were an acute protestant to call you *ad examen* on these articles, at the tribunal of history,—scripture—reason, or conscience, he would excite in your soul such an idea of turpitude, that your reverence would blush for thus declaiming! Yes! you have obtained the city—the fee—and the keys: but you have dethroned princes—traduced the apostle—butchered his defenders—and betrayed his master to obtain them! *Sebast. Barradii comment. tom. xi. lib. i. cap. 1.*

Almost every vice has been at one time or other in fashion, and this vicious way of preaching had once a great run. It was accounted learned, pious, and ingenious: but it was unnatural and unedifying, and soon fell first into disuse, and then into disgrace.

We will subjoin an example or two. "Brutus, consulting the oracle, who should be consul, received this answer, that he should be con-

ful, who first kissed his *mother*; he by and by fell on his face, kissed the *earth*, returned home, and was created consul. Thus men of the world do," &c. "Cyrus and Digenes lived both but for a time, and both in a time, though not both in a tub; and, Plutarch says, they both died in one day. Death, you see, makes no difference." &c. &c. *Geo. Hall's sermons, 1641, on Gen. iii.*

"As Pompey said, when going on a publick, but dangerous expedition, *Necesse est ut eam, non ut vivam*, so must we," &c. . . "As Juvenal said of children, *Maxima debetur pueris reverentia*, so I may say, in ANOTHER sense of the holy scriptures." *Dr. Reynold's ser. bef. the assembly of divines, 1652, Self-denial.*

"Cæsar was wont to command his soldiers *faciem ferire*, to strike at the *face*: the laws of our spiritual warfare give us another rule." "Pythagoras said, Above all things, be sure to make yourself master of your belly." &c. *Hale's golden remains, Ser. i. 1 Cor. vi. 13.*

mon is intolerable. I say much the same of citations from profane authors, they must be forborne, unless it be something so particular, so agreeable, and so apt to the text, as to carry its own recommendation along with it. Of this kind, I think, was the exordium of a sermon on this text. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* It was taken from Plutarch, who relates, that Alcibiades called one day to see Pericles, and was told by his domesticks, that their master was busy in preparing his accounts to lay before the republick: to which he immediately replied, Instead of labouring to make up his accounts, it would be incomparably better to render himself not accountable to them at all. It was added—that this is the notion of almost all wicked men, who, being ignorant of God their governor, and feeling their consciences charged with a thousand crimes, think only of eluding the judgment of God, and of avoiding that account, which they will one day be obliged to give to the master of all creatures—that if only one man, or two men were in question, the attempt of Alcibiades might succeed: but as it was God, with whom they had to do, it must be worse than foolish to imagine, his tribunal could be avoided—that there was no other way to take than to prepare to give an account to God, nor any advice more reasonable than to labour continually to do it well—and that, for this purpose, even self-interest should oblige us to have recourse to God to assist us by his grace—this is what the church aims to teach us in the words of the prophet, *So teach*



*teach us to "number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. (7)*

In general, the best exordiums are taken from *theology*; for, as on the one hand, they have always more relation to the matter of the text, so, on the other, they much better prepare the hearers' minds, being more grave, and free from the puerile pedantries of the college.

In order to compose an exordium, after you have well considered the senses of the text, and observed what are the principal matters, which ought to enter into the discussion, and after you have made the division, endeavour to reduce the whole to one common idea, and then choose some other idea naturally connected with that common idea, either immediately, or by means of another. If it be immediately connected with the subject, endeavour to reduce it to one proposition, which may be cleared and proved as you go on, or if it have parts, which require separate explications and proofs, it must be managed so as to include them, and finally, by the natural connection of that proposition with the discussion, enter into the text. If the proposition be connected with the text only remotely, then establish the first, pass on to the second, and so proceed from the second to the text. (8)

#### Exordiums

(7) *Citations from profane authors may be used, when they are pertinent, and carry their own recommendation with them.* Mr. Claude is to be understood here, as almost every where else, as reprobating only improprieties. He wisely observes, that circumstances may

render every thing proper, and every thing improper. A fitting of composition to these circumstances is the true art of composing.

(8) *Connect the parts of the exordium with the subject of the discourse.* "Quoties autem proœmio fuerimus usi, tum

Exordiums may be *taken from* almost all the same topicks as observations, that is from *genus, species, contraries, &c.* For there are but few good exordiums, which might not go into the discussion, under the title of general observations. Of such observations that must be chosen for an exordium, which is least essential, or least necessary to the discussion, and which besides is clear, agreeable, and entertaining. (9) A *comparison* may sometimes be employed in an exordium: but not often, nor must trivial comparisons be used, which all the world know, or which are taken from any thing mean, nor must they be embarrassing, taken from things unknown to the people, as those are, which are borrowed from mechanicks, astronomy, &c. of which the people know nothing at all.

*Bible-history* may be used: but sparingly; and the application must be always just, agreeable, and in some sort new and remarkable.

*Types* may also be employed: but with the same precautions, always consulting good sense, and taste.

The

sive ad expositionem transibimus, sive protinus ad probationem, id debet in principio postremum esse, cui commodissime jungi initium sequentium poterit. Ut non abruptè cadere in narrationem, ita non obscurè transcendere est optimum. Si verò longior sequetur, ac perplexa magis expositio, ad eam ipsam præparandus iudex erit: ut *Cicero* sæpius, sed hoc præcipue loco fecit: *Paulo longius ex-*

*ordium rei demonstrandæ petam; quod quæso, iudices, ne molestè patiamini. Principiis enim cognitis, multo facilius extrema intelligetis.*—*Pro Cluent. Quint. inst. lib. iv. de exordio.*

(9) *Exordiums must be agreeable and entertaining.* “Verum quoniam non est satis demonstrare discentibus, quæ sint in ratione præemii, sed dicendum etiam quomodo perfici facillimè possit: hoc adjicio, ut dicturus intueatur, quid, apud

The best method is to compose several *exordiums* for the same text, by turning your imagination divers ways, by taking it in all its different relations, for by such means you may choose the most proper. But after all these general precepts, which indeed ought to be known, and by which exordiums must be regulated, it is certain, *the invention and composition of an Exordium can only become easy by practice.* (1) A young preacher ought not

apud quem, pro quo, contra quem, quo tempore, quo loco, quo rerum statu, qua vulgi fama dicendum sit, quid judicem sentire credibile sit antequam incipiamus: tum quid aut desideremus, aut deprecemur, ipsa illum natura ed ducet, ut sciat quid primum dicendum sit." *Quint. ut supra.*

(1) *Practice makes composition easy.* The very ingenious author of *Elements of criticism* says, "*Taste must be improved by education, reflection, and experience,*" and adds the following note. "That these particulars are useful, it may be said necessary, for acquiring a discerning taste in the fine arts, will appear from the following facts, which shew the influence of *experience singly.* Those who live in the world and in good company, are quick sighted with respect to every defect or irregularity in behaviour: the very slightest singularity in motion, in speech, or in dress, which to a peasant would be invisible,

escapes not their observation. The most minute differences in the human countenance, so minute as to be far beyond the reach of words, are distinctly perceived by the plainest person: while, at the same time, the generality have very little discernment in the faces of other animals to which they are less accustomed. Sheep, for example, appear to have all the same face, except to the shepherd, who knows every individual in his flock, as well as he does his relations and neighbours. The very populace in Athens were critics in language, in pronunciation, and even in eloquence, harangues being their daily entertainment. In Rome at present the most illiterate shopkeeper is a better judge of statues, and of pictures, than persons of the highest education in London. These facts afford convincing evidence, that a discerning taste depends still more on experience than on nature." *Chap. xxv. on taste.*

not to complain of trouble, nor to be any way negligent in the matter, for he may be sure of succeeding by attention and application.

C H A P.



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## CH A P. X.

### Of the CONCLUSION. (1)

**T**HE Conclusion ought to be lively and animating, full of great and beautiful figures, aiming to move christian affections—as the love of God—hope—zeal—repentance—self-condemnation—a desire of self-correction—consolation—admi-

(1) *Conclusion.* This in a sermon answers to what in an oration is called the *peroration*. “It recapitulates, or sums up the strongest and chief arguments, and by moving the passions, endeavours to persuade the hearers to yield to the force of them.” —*Arist. Rhet.*

The fire of the preacher should blaze here, he should collect the ideas of his whole sermon into this part, as rays are collected in the focus of a burning glass, and inflame the hearts of his auditors. The three following general rules seem very proper. “1. Let the peroration, or conclusion, be short.—2. Let it

be bold and lively.—3. Let some one or more striking idea, not mentioned before in the discussion, be reserved for this part, and let it be applied with vigour. Bucholtzer used to say, *A good preacher was known by his conclusion.* He often closed his sermons designedly in a curt, terse, abrupt manner.—Here, my brethren! I stop, and I leave the holy spirit to preach to you.—Now, christians! I have done my part. May the Lord condescend to do his in your hearts!—I have planted, and watered. May God give the increase!—I have been preaching to you, and setting before you the gospel of salvation,

admiration of eternal benefits—hope of felicity—courage and constancy in afflictions—steadiness in temptations—gratitude to God—recourse to him by prayer—and other such dispositions. (2)

There

vation. May the Lord God apply it to your hearts, for his glory, and for your eternal felicity!—May the Lord set home to your hearts what I have been preaching! For my part, I am only his messenger to you. He is the shepherd and bishop of your souls!—With some one such sentence he frequently concluded his discourse.” *The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies.* Eccl. xii. 11.—*Keckermanni Rhet. Eccl. lib. i. cap. x.*

(2) *A conclusion should excite christian dispositions.* Bishop Burnet says, “A sermon, the conclusion whereof makes the auditory look pleased, and sets them all a talking with one another, was certainly either not rightly spoken, or not rightly heard; it has been fine, and has probably delighted the congregation rather than edified it: but that sermon that makes every one go away silent, and grave, and hastening to be alone to meditate, and pray the matter over in secret, has had a true effect.”—*Past. Care, ch. ix.*

The publisher of Massillon’s sermons describes in the pre-

face, the bishop’s method of preaching, by saying that “What formed the distinct character of Father Massillon’s eloquence was, that all his strokes aimed directly at the heart, so that what was simply reason, and proof in others, was feeling in his mouth. He not only convinced, he affected, moved, and melted his hearers. He did not confine himself to discover only the injustice, and unreasonableness of vice, he shew it in such a hideous, and hateful light, that you could no longer suffer yourself to be under the empire of such a cruel tyrant; you could no longer consider it in any other light than that of a sworn enemy of your felicity. Entering into an holy indignation against yourself, you would appear to yourself so blind, so unjust, so miserable, that you would see no other remedy than that of falling into the arms of virtue.” After this description he subjoins, “Sermons composed in this taste cannot fail of being heard with extreme attention, every one sees himself in the lively, and natural pictures in which the preacher paints the

There are three sorts of dispositions, or emotions, the violent—the tender—and the elevated. The *violent* are, for example, indignation, fear, zeal, courage, firmness against temptations, repentance, self-loathing, &c. (3)

The

the human heart, and discovers its most secret springs of action. Every one imagines, the discourse is addressed to him, and thinks the orator meant him only. Hence the remarkable effects of his instructions: nobody after hearing him stopped to praise, or criticise his sermon. Each auditor retired in a pensive silence, with a thoughtful air, downcast eyes, and composed countenance, carrying away the arrow, which this christian orator had fastened in his heart. These silent suffrages exceed the loudest applauses. When Father Massillon had preached his first advent at Versailles, Lewis the XIVth said these remarkable words to him, *Father, I have heard many fine orators in my chapel, and have been much pleased with them: but as for you, always when I have heard you, I have been very much displeased with myself.* A finished encomium, which does equal honour to the taste and piety of the monarch, and the talents of the preacher.” —*Serm. de Massillon. pet. car. pref.*

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(3) *Some emotions are violent, and must be excited by violent conclusions.* Example of the violent from Saurin's sermon on the *severity of God.* The text is Heb. xii. 29. *For our God is a consuming fire.* Having spoken of sudden unprepared deaths, and the uncertainty of sick-bed repentances, he adds, “*God's thoughts are not as our thoughts.* True, we have seen some few examples of people, who have proved after their recovery, that they were converted in their sickness; and who make us presume that some dying people may also be converted in the same manner: but yet, *Our God is a consuming fire.* How rare are these examples! Need we prove it? Need we demonstrate it? You are our proofs, you are our demonstrations. Which of us has not been sick, and (I speak of persons of a certain age) which of us has not seen himself sometimes at the brink of death? Who has not made resolutions in that terrible moment, who has not promised to reform himself? The laws of these exercises forbid

3 P

The *tender* emotions are joy, consolation, gratitude; tender subjects are pardon, pity, prayer, &c.

forbid me certain details, it is not allowable to name such of you as hear me: but I appeal to your consciences, and if your consciences be asleep, I appeal to the immortal God. How many persons are there amongst you, who have made us the depositaries of your resolutions, who engaged solemnly to renounce the world and its maxims? How many of you by these appearances of conversion have imposed on us, and imposed on yourselves too? How many, whom we should have alledged as new examples of people converted on a death-bed, if God had not restored you to life? Are you converted indeed? Have you renounced the world, and its maxims? Ah! when we would judge by the conduct of those, who are raised from sickness, of the fate of those, who are dead . . . My brethren, I dare not examine this matter to the bottom, and I leave it to your meditation.

“ *God’s thoughts are not as our thoughts.* It is true, there is nothing in our scriptures, which authorizes us to shut the gates of heaven against a dying man, who discovers tokens of repentance: Nor is there any thing, which authorizes us to tell him, There is

no hope for you, you are lost without remedy: but yet, *Our God is a consuming fire*, and there are hundreds of passages in scripture, which authorize, What do I say? There are hundreds of passages which forbid us, under pain of being punished with all the judgments reserved for the crimes, to conceal any thing from the criminal; there are hundreds of passages, which command us to tell you, you who are fifty years of age, you who are sixty, you who are fourscore, you who after this put off your conversion, that it is a madness, an excess of hardness, and indolence, which all the flames of hell can never expiate.

“ After all, this is an article, of which your pastors hope to render to God a faithful account, how undeserving soever we acknowledge ourselves of his patience. How often have we represented to you the dreadful consequences of your delays? We would take you to witness, walls of this church! if you were capable of giving evidence. But you shall be our witnesses, ye discourses preached in these assemblies! a remembrance of which shall be awakened in that great day, when our hearers shall give an account  
of



&c. (4) The *elevated* are admiration of the majesty of God, the ways of providence, the glory of

of the use they have made of them. Consciences ! you shall be our witnesses, you have heard our directions. You yourselves shall be our witnesses, gainayers ! you, who have so often pretended, by reversing the ideas, which the gospel gives us of the mercy of God, to obscure others, which it gives us of his justice and vengeance—*We are innocent of your blood, we have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God*—and though, when called before his tribunal, we must say to him under a sense of the weaknesses, with which our ministry was accompanied, *Enter not into judgment with thy servants, O Lord* ; yet will we even then venture to say, when we recollect the overtures we have made, and the intreaties we have used to stir you up to improve the present moment, *I have preached righteousness in the great congregation. Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest, and though I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought, yet my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.*

“ Ah ! May God animate us with nobler motives ! God grant, not that the torments

inflicted on our hearers in the œconomy of eternity may be the apology of our ministry, but rather may God make you *our crown and joy in the day of the Lord ! Amen.*”—*Saur. Ser. tom. vi. ser. quatrieme.*

(4) *Tender conclusion.* Example of a tender conclusion, from a sermon of Bp. Massillon to his clergy. “ And indeed, my brethren, can a pastor live either without prayer, or can he pray but seldom, or can he pray without fervour, and zeal, or can he confine all his prayers to a cold, inattentive, and hasty rehearsal of his breviary, while he passes his life amongst his parishioners, and sees the greatest part of them living in sin, and perishing every day before his eyes ? When the high-priest Aaron saw a part of his people smitten by the hand of God, and expiring before him, he ran between the dead, and the living—he lifted his hands to heaven—he wept for the misery of such as fell before his eyes—he cried—he wrestled—and his prayer was heard, the plague was stopped, and the sword of God’s anger retired. A good pastor never prays for his people in vain. *And Aaron stood*

of Paradise, the expectation of benefits, &c.  
(5.)

There

*between the dead, and the living, and the plague was stayed.*

“This, my brethren, is the image of a good pastor. Amongst his people, (as I may say) he walks between the dead, and the living; he sees by his side some of his flock dead, and others ready to expire, having only some flattering signs of life. He sees the invisible sword of God’s wrath hang over these people, he sees reigning crimes, and hastening death. All this he beholds, and it is a spectacle, which he has every day before his eyes. If he is not affected with this: he is not a pastor, he is a mercenary wretch, who sees in cold blood the destruction of his flock. He is either a minister fallen from the grace of the priesthood, or one who has never received it. But if this affects him, ah! what must the first motion of his grief and zeal be? He will address himself to God, who wounds and heals—he will offer to him secret tears of grief and love for his people—he will remind an angry God of his ancient mercies—he will move his paternal heart by his sighs—and offer himself to be accursed for his

brethren.—*Aaron stood between the dead, and the living, and the plague was stayed.*

“No, my brethren, a priest, a pastor who does not pray, who does not love prayer, does not belong to that church, which *prays without ceasing*. He is not united to the spirit of prayer, and love. He is a dry and barren tree, which cumbereth the Lord’s ground. He is the enemy, and not the father of his people. He is a stranger, who has usurped the pastor’s place, and to whom the salvation of the flock is indifferent. Wherefore, my brethren, be faithful to prayer, and your functions will be more useful, your people more holy, your labours will seem much sweeter, and the church’s evils will diminish.” *Maffil. disc. synodaux, tom. ii. disc. x.*

(5) *Elevated conclusion.* Example of an elevated conclusion from Saurin. “I am God’s (thus speaks the believer) I am God’s, not only because he has a sovereign empire over me as a creator; not only because as a redeemer he has the right of a master over a slave, whom he has purchased; but I am God’s, because I love him, and because I know God is worthy

There are some christian passions which may be excited either by a tender, or violent method. Repentance

of my love. The lively impressions, which his adorable perfections have made on me, make me impatient with every thing, that intercepts my view of him. I could not be content to be any longer upon earth, except his law, which is the rule of my conduct, ordained it: yet the law, which ordains me to live, does not forbid my desiring to die. Death I consider as the summit of my desires, and as the consummation of my happiness. While I am *in the body*, I am *absent from the Lord*. But it is incomparably better for me to be *absent from the body*, and *present with the Lord*, and what should stay me upon earth, when God shall please to call me to himself!

“It shall not be you, *criminal* objects. You I never loved, and, if I have sometimes suffered myself to be seduced by your deceitful delights, I have been so punished by the griefs you have caused me, by the confusion the remembrance has made in my conscience, that I have no fear of your entering into the plan of my felicity.

“It shall not be you, *lawful* objects, how tender soever the

bonds, which unite me to you are; you are only rills of happiness to me, and I go to the spring of felicity; you are only emanations of goodness, and I go to the *blessed God*.

“Nor shall it be you, objects of *religion*. You are only means, and death will conduct me to the end. You are only the way, and death will bring me home. True, I shall read no more excellent books, in which superior geniusses have drawn the truth from an abyss of prejudices, and darkneses, where it was buried. I shall no more hear discourses in which the preacher, animated by the spirit of God, endeavours to raise me above the present world: but I shall contemplate, I shall hear the eternal wisdom, and therein discover the views, designs, and plans of my creator; and I shall learn more in one moment of that union, than all books and all religious discourses could possibly teach me.

“True, I shall no more give myself up to you, Closet-exercises, holy meditations, efforts of a soul, that seeks its God, and which cries to him, *Lord, shew me thy glory*, Lord dissipate these clouds, and darkneses,



pentance is of this kind, for which extremely tender motives may be employed, as the love, and bounty of God, which we have so unworthily treated. Violent motives may also be used, as censure, an enumeration and description of the enormity of the sins reigning amongst us, the horror of our ingratitude, the fear of God's judgments, the justice of his scourges, and chastisements, &c. (6)

In

darknesses, which hide thee from my sight; let that light approach me, which has hitherto been inaccessible: but this light will be approached, these clouds and darknesses will be dissipated, I shall be no more in the closet: but I shall be like the seraphims at the foot of the throne of God, and the lamb.

“ True, I shall no more know you holy sacraments, august ceremonies which have so often filled my soul with consolation, which have so much contributed to unite my heart to God, and which have so often been to me a heaven upon earth: but I shall receive you immediately, effusions of divine love! Pleasures at God's right hand! Fulness of joy! I shall . . .

. . . . . Alas! Perhaps your hearts escape me, my brethren, perhaps these dispositions, superior to your piety, are no longer the subjects of your attention. I have

however no other direction to give you, and the abridgment of all this discourse, of all my preaching, and of all my whole ministry is, LOVE GOD, be to God by inclination what you are by condition and engagement, then the miseries of this life will be supportable, and then the approaches of death will be delightful. God grant you this grace, to him be honour, and glory for ever, amen.”  
*Saur. ser. tom. viii. ser. ii. sur l'empire de Jesus Christ.*

(6) *Conclusion may be mixed.*  
Example of a mixed conclusion from Massillon. “ The annihilation of the soul is the last resource of impiety. But what punishment would it be for a wicked man to be no more? He wishes for annihilation, and proposes it as his highest hope. He lives tranquil in the midst of his pleasures in this agreeable expectation. What! Will the just God punish a sinner by giving him



In like manner, firmness against temptations may be discussed; for tender motives may be used, as the vanity of the promises and hopes of this world,

him what he desires? Ah! It is not thus that God punishes. For what can the wicked find so very bad in annihilation? Would it be the privation of God? But a wicked man does not love him, he does not know him, he will not know him, for his god is himself. Would it be annihilation? But what more pleasing to such a monster, who knows that if he lives after death it is only to suffer, and expiate the horrors of an abominable life. Would it be the loss of worldly pleasures, and of all the objects of his passions? But when he ceases to be, he must cease to love. Imagine if you can a more desirable lot for the wicked, and shall this after all be the sweet end of his debaucheries, horrors, and blasphemies!

“No, my brethren, *the hope of the wicked shall perish*: but his crimes shall not perish with him. His torments will be as endless as his pleasures would have been, if he had been master of his fate. He would fain perpetuate upon earth his sensual pleasures. Death limits his crimes: but does not limit his criminal desires. The just judge who searches the heart will pro-

portion then the suffering to the offence, immortal flames for intentionally immortal pleasures, and eternity itself will be only a just compensation, and an equality of punishment. *These shall go away into everlasting punishment.*

“What is the conclusion of this discourse?—That a wicked man is to be pitied for placing his highest hope in a frightful uncertainty about revealed truths.—He is to be pitied, in that he is not able to live peaceably, unless he lives without faith, without worship, without God, without hope—that he is to be pitied if the gospel must be a fable, the faith of all ages credulity, the consent of all men a popular error, the first principles of nature and reason childish prejudices, the blood of so many martyrs, whom the hope of a futurity supported in torments, a concerted game to deceive mankind; the conversion of the universe a human enterprize, the accomplishment of prophecies a lucky hit, in one word, if all that is best established in the universe must be found false, so that he may not be eternally miserable. What madness to be  
able

world, which are only false, and delusive appearances—the consideration of the miserable state of backsliders and apostates—the dignity to which God calls his children—the eternal rewards which attend perseverance—the joy of a good man when he has gained a signal victory over temptations—Violent methods may also be employed, as—inspiring an holy ambition to defeat the designs of the world—a contempt of the plots, and powers against us—the hope, or rather the inviolable assurance we have that all the powers of earth joined together cannot shake us. St. Paul uses mixed motives at the end of the eighth of Romans. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate*

us

able to contrive a kind of tranquility made up of so many foolish suppositions!

“O man! *I will shew you a more excellent way.* Fear this futurity, which you force yourself to doubt. Ask us no more what passes in that other life, of which we speak: but ask yourself frequently what you are doing in this. Calm your conscience by the innocence of your manners, and not by the impiety of your sentiments. Set your heart at rest by calling upon God,

and not by doubting whether he sees you. The peace of the wicked is only a frightful despair; seek your happiness, not in shaking off the yoke of faith, but in tasting how sweet it is. Practise the maxims it prescribes, and your reason will no longer refuse to submit to the mysteries it proposes. Futurity will cease to be incredible to you, when you cease to live like those that confine all their felicity within the narrow bounds of life. Then far from

us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. (7)

A conclusion should be *diversified*. I mean, we should not be content to move one single christian passion, many must be touched, and a proper length of discourse assigned to each, in order to stir up the passion. Too long time, however, must not be spent: but, when the effect is evidently produced, pass to another passion. As the conclusion ought to be composed at least of four, or five reflections (naturally arising from the text, either general, from the whole text, or particular, from some of the parts, into which it is divided) so if possible these reflections must be placed in prudent order, so that the weakest and least powerful may be the first, and the strongest last, and so that the discourse may become more rapid as it runs.

I think, however, it would be vicious to finish with motives too violent, as subjects tending to horror—indignation—or heavy censure. It would be much better in general to close with a tender, or even with an elevating motive. Different motives may be (and indeed they ought to be) mixed in the same conclusion, that is, violent, tender, and elevated, in order to stir up many passions of different kinds.

Conclusion sometimes delights in examples, similitudes, short and weighty sentences, the inventions

from fearing this futurity, you will hasten to it in desire, you will sigh after the happy day, when the son of man, the father of the world to come, will appear to punish infidels, and to receive into

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his kingdom all such as have lived in expectation of a blessed immortality." *Massil. ser. Car. tom. i. pour le lundi de la 1. sem.*

(7) *St. Paul concludes with mixed motives.* We cannot



tions of a fine imagination, and, in one word, it need not be either so chaste or so regular as the body of the sermon, where more accuracy must be observed. There is no danger when a preacher in a conclusion gives himself up to the (8) fire of his

omit this opportunity of observing the beauty of that fine method of concluding public worship, used after apostolical example in christian churches. The preacher shuts up all by lifting holy hands in prayer to God, by spreading them over the people, and by saying, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.* Some add other words of their own—the *saving* grace of our Lord Jesus—the *everlasting* love of God the *father*—the *sweet* and *comfortable* communion of the Holy Ghost be, *and remain* with you, and so on. When shall we cease to be wise above what is written! When shall we be content with the simplicity of revelation! This, though short, is a fine significant part of sacred worship, and the people should be taught to avoid that hateful custom of hurrying out before it is completed. It should be uttered gravely, deliberately, affectionately, and kindly by the preacher, and it should

be attended to in a similar manner by the people.

(8) *A preacher may give himself up to the fire of his genius.* The Archbishop of Cambray, that fine cool reasoner in his other works, is remarkable for this fire in his sermons, particularly in the conclusions of them. The following specimen is from a sermon of his on the feast of St. Bernard.

“ Who are you, you profane men, who laugh when you see a renewed sinner following Jesus Christ, and counteracting the torrent of all his passions? What then, you cannot endure that we should declare ourselves openly for the God, who created us? According to you, it is a weakness to fear his eternal and almighty justice, and not to be ungrateful to his goodness. According to you, it is a folly to live by faith, in hope of eternal life. Who then are you, you that make game of religion, as well as of the religious? Are you of another religion? Do not you believe any? Go then out of  
our



his genius, provided he say nothing extravagant,

our churches, be gone from our mysteries, go live without hope, without Christ, without God in the world. Go where your impious, and brutal despair would hurry you. But alas! who would believe it? You are christians, and you have promised to renounce the world, and its pomps, to carry the cross after Jesus Christ, to despise all you see, and to aspire after invisible realities. You have promised, you dare not deny your promise, you dare not renounce your salvation, you tremble when approaching death shews you the abyss that opens under your feet. Miserable wretches! foolish people! You would have us think you wise, and you treat those as fools, who, hoping for benefits which you pretend not to have renounced, labour to obtain them. O destruction of common-sense! O monstrous folly! O devils, you possess them, it is not they that speak, it is you who blaspheme in them. We want, my brethren, another Bernard, though I know not whether the impiety, unknown in his age, but fashionable in ours, would not resist all his doctrine, and all his miracles. Does he not speak

to you every day by his writings, and by histories of his times which attest what he did? Let us hear him, my brethren; at least, at least in this day harden not your hearts. O my children, (Thus he speaks, and thus he has a right to speak to you) O my children! Must I then rise up in judgment against you? The light which your fathers saw, and which from generation to generation has been reflected even on you, does it only serve to discover your iniquities? What have I not suffered that I might present you all together as a virgin without spot to the holy bridegroom? But what do I see amongst you! O my children! I have offered you a blessing, and you have rejected it. The curse will come, it will come, and you will be overwhelmed with it. It will distill on your heads drop by drop to the end. No, I will no longer be your father. I will harden my heart, and my soul shall reject you for ever. I will forget you, I will be ashamed of you at the coming of Jesus Christ, and I will demand of him vengeance for my words, or rather for his which you have so often despised." *Fen. Oeuvres philos. tom. ii. p. 270.*

gant, or capricious, nothing that favours of enthusiasm, or declamation.

I conclude these notes with one word of Bp. Burnet's, and one of Bp. Wilkin's.

The former says, "Artificial eloquence without a flame within, is like artificial poetry, all its productions are forced, and unnatural, and in a great measure ridiculous. Art helps, and guides nature; but if one was not born with this flame, art will only spoil, and make him redundant. A man must have in himself a deep sense of the truth and power of religion. He must have a life and flame in his thoughts with relation to these subjects. He must have felt in himself those things, which he intends to explain, and recommend to others. There is an authority in the simplest things that can be said when they carry visible characters

of genuineness in them." *Past. care, chap. ix.*

Bp. Wilkin says, "As the milder affections *ra 7dn*, do best suit with the introduction, which insinuates into the love, and attention of the hearers; so *ra 7adn*, the more eager, and vehement affections will best become the conclusions." "But (adds he from Luther) *bene orasse, est bene studuisse.*" And this indeed is the soul of all. *Wilk. Ecclesiastes.*

*Give attendance to reading, exhortation, and doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them. Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. Paul to Tim.*

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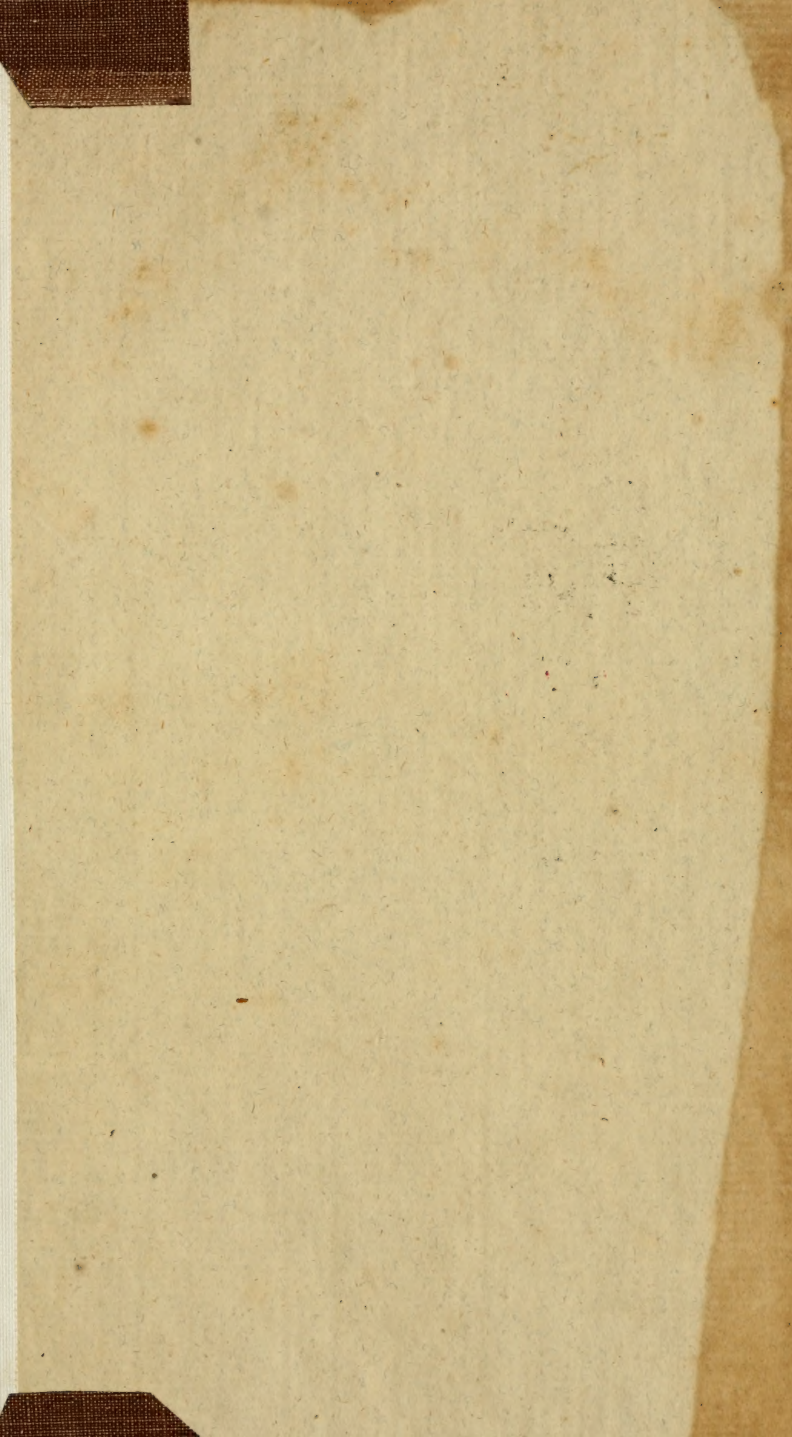
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